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NOTES ON LEVITICUS.



NOTES ON LEVITICUS

BY
THE LATE FRANCIS JOULE.

EDITED BY G. H. PEMBER, M.A.,
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PREFACE.

THE manuscript of this book was found, together with many similar papers, in the drawers of the late Francis Joule, Esq., of Stone in the county of Stafford, and was probably written about five and thirty or forty years ago. It was not directly prepared for the press; indeed the disposition of the author was so retiring and self-diffident that he probably never contemplated the appearance of his thoughts in print. But although, from this cause, they are somewhat fragmentary, they nevertheless contain so much valuable exposition, and show so great a power of comparing spiritual things with spiritual, that it does not seem right to let them be lost.

Accordingly, at Mrs. Joule's request, I have made such alterations and abbreviations as appeared to be absolutely necessary, and so send forth the book, hoping that by it one who has been sometime dead to this world may yet speak in it, and that—if it be the Master's will—a little may, perchance, be added to the work which he did while still in the flesh.

G. H. P.

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NOTES ON LEVITICUS.

CHAPTER I.

THE BURNT OFFERING.

THE tabernacle with its vessels and furniture was all completed according to the word of the Lord to His servant Moses:—"And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount" (Exod. xxv. 40). It was set up according to the ordering of the Lord in its minutest details:—"And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was showed thee in the mount" (Exod. xxvi. 30). There was on earth an exhibition in type of that which Moses had seen on the mount, in heaven, beyond the region of blackness and darkness and tempest, in the glory which had made his own countenance radiant. And the fellowship of these things was to be learnt in the representation of them, made with hands indeed and failing, but "figures of the true," showing where and how, according to the express arrangement of God, access to Him might be obtained. But it was not specially connected with any earthly locality; it was a moveable tent, to be set up in the midst of the camp, though apart from it. Separated by sin from His people, God would now appoint a place and means whereby He might draw near to them, and

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speaking to His servant Moses among them, without the need of summoning him away to the heavenly glory on the mount. And not only so, but this tent of meeting was also "the tabernacle of the congregation," to which all were free at all times to come, only in the way that God had appointed. The place of offering was the brazen altar before the door of the tabernacle, standing directly opposite the sanctuary of God's presence, whence He would look out, and behold that which was passing outside. The way into the holiest was not yet made manifest; but the vail was, as we know, the flesh of Jesus, through which God would look; and through which, too, *faith* might pass.

The first offering was the burnt sacrifice, that which should be wholly burnt, that which should be altogether for God, entirely acceptable in itself to Him. It was, of express ordinance, to be "of the cattle—of the herd, or flock—a male without blemish;" but, if he who brought it were poor, it might be "of the fowls." Thus God has met man, in his deepest and lowest condition of necessity, in the way marked out for the approach of any to present before Him the one great and infinitely acceptable burnt offering. But He has not made the way of approach free and open, and within the compass of the extremest case of need, that we may lightly regard it. Let not any who have the offering of the flock or the herd, be content to bring before God but a pair of turtle doves or pigeons. The same God who says, "Believe and be saved," also adds, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled," &c. (Col. i. 23).

The *character* of the offering was "a male without blemish"—perfection. The *place* of the offering was "at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the

Lord,"—on earth, the place of the offerers, but before the presence of God in heaven. The *purpose* of the offering was that it might be accepted for him who brought it—the perfect offering in the place of the imperfect offerer. The *manner* of its being presented ;—"He shall put his hand upon the head of the offering." And the *result* :—"it shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him." But atonement, in this offering, probably signifies rather acceptance than cleansing or expiation, as in the sin offering. It should give a man full freedom of access to God, as a *worshipper* before Him, even as the offering was perfect, and perfectly acceptable.

The *detailed manner* of the offering was as follows. It must be killed ; for no measure of obedience short of obedience unto death would be perfect and acceptable before God. Man had sinned, and God had declared that death was the result of sin. Life had reverted to God, and life must be given to bring back the sinner to his place before God. The Lord Jesus came forward as the spotless victim to be offered, one that God could accept. He offered Himself of His own voluntary will, according to His own words, "I lay it down of myself." Here was perfection in the offering of a perfect sacrifice, "even unto death."

But when the blood was shed, the priests, Aaron's sons, began to take their part in the offering,—in the sprinkling of the blood round about the altar. And herein we see our own communion with the spotless victim offered upon earth, but accepted as a sweet savour by God in heaven.

The animal was then flayed, and cut in pieces, searched and examined in every part, lest there should be lurking in it any hidden spot or blemish of corruption which

might ascend in the smoke before God. It might have been supposed that Jesus, in stooping down to mingle with the evil of this world, and entering into the sympathies of our fallen nature, had contracted defilement thereby ; but no, "the inwards and the legs" were found, as all the rest, to have received no taint whatever. They had been in the midst of the defilement, in constant contact with it, but they were not defiled ; they remained intrinsically pure and spotless. These, with the head and the fat—that which characterised the offering, all its intelligence, all its nature, and the internal proof of its soundness and perfection—were all without omission (except the blood and the skin) to be laid in order upon the fire—upon that which was to try and prove their purity and acceptance—and all were consumed. And from the whole arose before God "a savour of rest," "a sweet savour unto the Lord."

The burnt offering must be of *the herd, of the flock, or of the fowls.*

God requires a perfect offering. Such only can be acceptable, and a sweet savour to Him; not only the best of its kind, but of the best kind. Such was Christ, and such should be our apprehension of Him, and such our own offering (Eph. v. 1, 2).

This is a voluntary offering, and the whole is to be burnt (except the blood and the skin). It may be of the flocks or herds, but must be a male without blemish. That of the herd is set forth first, as being the most perfect type of what it represented. It was of the best kind of animal, perfect, and found to be so when cut to pieces and seen of God.

VER. 4. *He shall put his hand on the head of the offering ; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement.* The

former clause seems generally to imply impartation; but since the latter does not here signify expiation, but rather acceptance, the laying on of the hand may imply recognition (according to the measure of understanding), or identification.

VER. 10. Next, *of the flocks*. Less than a full estimate of what God requires may be allowed, or rather, less than a full understanding of it. But the addition of a special ordinance seems to intimate that no one may presume to think lightly of the lesser offering.

It must be *killed on the north side of the altar*. And this is the place where Ezekiel saw the image of jealousy. God looks with a jealous eye upon any who slight or undervalue His burnt offering. This is a most needed caution; for, in Ezekiel's time, God's sacrifice had become so far disregarded, that at last an abomination had taken the place of it (Ezek. viii.). It is not *said* that it shall be accepted,—it might be so, it would be, if it were found to be perfect of its kind. It was, as in the former case, to be cut in pieces, and, in the end, it is said to be “a sweet savour.”

VER. 14. But further, the offering might be *of the fowls*, though only of the kind specified. The reason of this is shown in chap. v. 7; xii. 8; xiv. 21. “If he be poor and cannot get so much,” &c. And this is indeed like the glad tidings preached to the poor. There might be but a very slight understanding of the extent of the full value of the offering; but one thing is absolutely required, the admission that a sacrifice is needed, that acceptance and access to God are desired. For the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. The cry may be no more than, “Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief;”

but the Lord has declared, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

The north side of the altar was not appointed for this offering, there was much less of detail in the examination. The need of acceptance was known; its perfection and completeness in all its particulars was but little understood. The head was to be wrung off, and the bird cleft down with the *wings*, but not divided. God saw that it was perfect of its kind, and it was a sweet savour unto Him.

The birds afforded no skin for a covering: the feathers were to be burnt. This is significant: skins were first given as a covering for nakedness, in lieu of the fig leaves which man had provided for himself. There will ever be to us a sense of something wanting, unless we so discern the perfection of Christ as to feel that He is all in all.

Again, in the case of the animals, the inwards were washed and afterwards burnt, as having been proved to be pure, though in contact with defilement; but the crop of the bird was to be cast away. This points to some lingering suspicion and distrust in the heart, a falling short of the full apprehension of what Christ is.

Nevertheless, the offering is a burnt sacrifice, a "sweet savour unto the Lord."

Christ is referred to in the New Testament as the *Lamb*. May we thence infer that the Church's apprehension of Him is signified thereby; while the more perfect animal indicates God's sense of the value of His sacrifice, and the fowl the imperfect understanding of the Israelite?

CHAPTER II.

THE MEAT OFFERING.

THIS, as the burnt offering, was altogether pure and acceptable before God. The *memorial* thereof was to be burnt, and in no offering made by fire was there to be leaven, which is a type of corruption. Nor was any thing permitted to be offered in self-will, however desirable it might seem in our estimation. Honey is sweet to our natural sense and acceptable ; but as an offering it is forbidden ; it is not amongst the things ordained of the Lord. He finds a sweet savour in Christ, not in any thing we may add thereto.

The burnt offering in itself shows entire acceptance. This is needed to be known of all, that they are acceptable with God. Therefore, in the meat offering, for this end, a portion is offered by fire, and found to be a sweet savour. That which remains has its value proved in another way, by its being made to afford a participation, in common to Aaron and his sons, of that of which God has partaken. It is food, and communion. It is made without leaven, eaten without leaven, and in the holy (or most holy in Numb. xviii. 10) place : it may be partaken of by those who have received the anointing (Numb. xviii. 8), but by no other.

It was of fine flour. Jesus partakes of our nature, and we of His. The fine flour is man—human nature—but without sin. It is not an offering of that which is pol-

luted or partakes of pollution. "Bread corn is bruised" (Isa. xxviii. 28), and when it has been bruised and sifted, and when all extraneous matter has been removed, the fine flour alone remains. So will our bodies be in resurrection life, when they shall be changed into the likeness of His glorious body, and we shall know to the full the power of His resurrection.

Oil was poured on it. The Spirit and communion thereby. The Spirit was fully given to the Lord Jesus, and by Him to His body, the Church. For through Him we have access by one Spirit to the Father. The Holy Ghost, descending in a bodily shape, abode upon the Lord Jesus, and was manifestly with Him. And we in spirit partake of and feed upon that which we know is perfectly acceptable before God (for a memorial was burnt), and receive sustenance and strength thereby.

Frankincense was put thereon. Of the two former things a *portion* was to be taken for a memorial, but *all* of this. The fine flour mingled with oil shows the intrinsic value of the offering; this gives the full understanding and estimation of it, which none but God could have. It was to Him the offering was made, and He alone could receive the fragrance of it. But the frankincense may also signify prayer (for incense is the prayers of saints, Rev. v. 8), and this also essentially belongs to God. The strength we acquire by feeding on Christ will be put forth in communion with God in prayer; and thus, whilst we are partaking and receiving the blessing, a fragrant perfume is ascending before God. The Church can look upon and understand the acceptance, the fragrance of the offering as ascending up before the Lord, whilst the offering itself (save a handful as the proof of acceptance) is left for their portion. Herein both Aaron and

his sons participate. Jesus alone can offer a perfect and acceptable offering to God, but, that having been done, we have to know that it was done *for us*, both as to the perfection of the atonement and our acceptance thereby, as well as in all the blessing that has resulted from it. And this is life, and joy, and glory. We eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of man, and "whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life." "For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed" (John vi. 54, 56). And whatever Jesus was in the perfectness of His acceptance before God, the Church is also for "ye are complete in Him."

"And every meat offering mingled with oil, and dry, shall all the sons of Aaron have, one as much as another" (vii. 10). "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. xii. 13).

"And all the meat offering that is baken in the oven, and all that is dressed in the frying pan, and in the pan, shall be the priest's that offereth it" (vii. 9.)

The meat offering in general indicates feeding on Christ, and communion with Christ, in acceptance and communion with God. It is the portion alike of all who have received the anointing. All who are spiritual have power and privilege to partake of these spiritual blessings (vii. 10; Numb. xviii. 8). But (from chap. vii. 9) there seems to be a speciality of individual blessing in this as in other ordinances.

Of the same materials (ver. 4, 5, 7) cakes unleavened and mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil, are made, "*baken in an oven.*" In the first ordinance the oil was poured on the flour, but here the offering was mingled or anointed with it. It is in the full communion of the whole body that the full blessing

is found; but individually, apart from the realising of this, the blessing may not be full (Exod. xxix. 2). It must be the same in kind, but not necessarily in degree.

VER. 5. But in the next kind of offering, that which was *baken in a pan, or a flat plate or slice*, we have the materials first mingled, and then, when baked, parted in pieces, and oil poured thereon. The Spirit *was* there, and *known* to be there. It was one though broken, and on each part, when broken and seen by God, the oil was poured for the second time.

Then "*in the frying pan.*" This is more general. The fine flour was there, and also the oil. But nothing special is said about it. For this is what must be true of *every* individual believer. He has life with Jesus, and with Him, too, the Spirit.

Of each of these offerings it is afterwards said (vii. 9), that "it shall be the priest's that offers it." Thus we have both a oneness and an equality, and yet distinction in individual cases. And herein we have a hint of the duty and privilege of growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

VER. 11. Then follows a caution *as to leaven*. There must be no impurity. And this holds good both in regard to the perfection of Christ, and the practical application (1 John iii. 3). And further, *no honey* can be offered. Some things in nature appear so sweet and amiable in themselves, that we might think they would be acceptable with God. But they are not in the ordinance, and are, therefore, forbidden. What God has shown to be acceptable to Himself is Christ, and it is only Christ, and practically the fruits of the Spirit by Him, that we can present to God. We may do much, but, if it be not done in accord with the leading of the

Spirit, it is mere self-will ; it is not acceptable, nor can be accepted. Both the leaven and the honey may be there ; but they are not to be *burnt*.

VER. 12. *Oblation of first fruits.* An offering of which no part was to be burnt. This is not Christ, but is probably a glimpse of the Church, accepted indeed, but not in itself, only in Him. They shall be offered to the Lord, but not burnt. Compare the case of the leavened loaves in chap. xxiii. 17-20 ; James i. 18.

This notice of the first fruits, in connection with those offerings of which a memorial was to be burnt with fire, points to the result of Christ's work, and the love of God to sinners.

VER. 13. *Every meat offering shall be seasoned with salt.* They should have a savour and relish, not be insipid. This, perhaps, indicates a perception and understanding of the value of Christ, and suggests a most practical consideration to us individually. Salt is of savour, and preserves from corruption. "Ye are the salt of the earth ; but if the salt have lost his savour," &c. Therefore it is said, "*Have salt in yourselves,*" and "Let your conversation be . . . seasoned with salt," that its savour may be perceived by those who hear it, and may minister grace to them. It is called "the salt of the covenant of God," and God's covenant is ever of the good that proceeds only from Himself. But He gives it in order that its savour may be spread abroad, and perceived, in those to whom He gives it, by Himself. *Salt is good*, but, if it has lost its saltiness, it is only fit to be cast upon the dunghill. And this will be the trial ; for "every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt" (Mark ix. 49. See also Ezek. xliii. 24). The day shall try by fire, and every sacrifice of God

shall be shown thereby to have intrinsic value, the true savour of the covenant of God.

We have, in Numb. xviii. 19, mention of a covenant of salt which was with those who were to be separate and distinct, holy to the Lord. It was all of God, Whose new covenant runs thus,—“I will put my laws in their hearts.” “Ye are the salt of the earth.”

VER 14. Then we have a meat offering of *first fruits*, of which a memorial should be burnt as a sweet savour. And this shows us how completely Christ was made in all things like unto His brethren, sin only excepted; we also being made like Him, and thus accepted. He went up in perfect acceptance before God in *human nature*. In us there is sin, and we need to have it put away, that we may be made like unto Him. This will only be done in resurrection; but in our raised bodies we shall still be ourselves, still be human. And in this offering of first-fruits, our nature is shown in all its perfectness of acceptance, a burnt offering, a sweet savour unto the Lord. It is human nature indeed, but purged of its evil, and made holy; it is dried by the fire, corn beaten out of full ears. The green ears do not acquire their dryness and maturity by unaided nature, but by the action of extraneous fire. So do we by the fire of affliction attain to maturity of faith. And we get the blessing as a kind of first-fruits of His creatures, by faith. By faith the sacrifice is acceptable, though we are naturally unfit to be offered. These ears are the wave sheaf gathered before the harvest, which includes both Christ and His Church. While still growing here, there was that which showed their superiority; for they were full ears, and the corn was *beaten* out.

Thus we have the full participation and identification of Christ with us, and of ourselves with Him. We are,

and we partake of, that which is quite acceptable with God, a sweet savour. We should feed upon it—it is our equal portion—taking care that “the salt” be not lacking either in our own apprehension of Christ, or in practically using the fulness of grace which is in Him for us; and remembering that “every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.”

Our participation in this offering will be mainly in service. It is in our labour for Christ that we learn and value our portion in Him.

CHAPTER III.

THE PEACE OFFERING.

THE name of this offering marks its characteristic feature—peace.

The animal to be offered might be of the herd or the flock, a male or a female. When male and female are mentioned together, there seems to be a reference, more or less distinct, to Christ and the Church. He Himself is truly the one perfect peace-offering. "He is our peace, Who hath made both one," etc. "Having made peace through the blood of His cross." "He came and preached peace," etc. But the Church has not only the knowledge of peace as her own abiding portion—"My peace I give unto you"—but is also the minister of peace to others. The Apostle applies the word of Isaiah (lii. 7), concerning the Lord, to His Church, as the preacher of the glad tidings of peace (Rom. x. 15). And the Lord, in His directions to the twelve, when He sent them forth, says, "When ye come into an house, salute it; and if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it" (Matt x. 12, 13).

VER. 2. *He shall lay His hand, etc.*, as in the burnt offering. In this case the fat (etc., as described) of the victim was to be offered, while the whole remainder of the offering was to be left. God was to be recognised in it, and then a blessing was left for the priests and the offerer: "Peace I leave with you." It was left for the Church's portion, and for her ministration to others. That

which was offered proved the soundness and excellency of the offering, and so belonged to God who could estimate it. It is nowhere stated what was to be done with the body of the animal (the offering itself is the immediate point); but afterwards (vii. 11) there is a command that it should be eaten on the *same*, or, at any rate, on the next day. But the characteristic of the burnt offering was here also; it was a sweet savour unto the Lord.

VER. 7. When a *lamb* is to be offered, there is a little difference in the ordinance as to the portion to be burnt; an addition, viz. "the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone." And it is further stated that what is thus offered is the *food* of the offering. There was also a special ordinance in the parallel place of the burnt offering; but there it had reference to locality.

The food is that which is acceptable and satisfactory to God, "the God of peace." We feed on it, and this is communion with God. "The God of peace shall be with you." "*My* peace I give to you." In the offering of the *goat*, there is but little variation in the ordinance; the animals were different, but their value was much the same. In different individuals, there may be, arising from individual peculiarities, something peculiar in the manner of apprehending Christ, while in each there may be a true and equal apprehension of His value. Various characteristics may be seen in believers, but unto all "He is precious."

VER. 16. Then it is added, "*All the fat is the Lord's*;" and a perpetual statute to eat neither fat nor blood follows. It was God Who gave the sacrifice—His beloved Son. All the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. Our life is forfeited to God, and if given to us again, it is given of free grace. The blood was the atone-

ment, the forfeited life given. "He had power to lay it down, and power to take it up again."

In chap. vii. 11-18, we learn that the body of the animal was to be eaten, and that there were two or three divisions of the offering.

1. A thanksgiving. It shall be offered with the usual meat-offering, but with the addition of leavened bread. Peace, when known, will express itself in thanksgiving; but there is imperfection and evil mixed up with it, and this is signified by the leaven. It was to be eaten on the same day. Thanksgiving is the immediate result of peace. "In everything give thanks," is the command. "By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Heb. xiii. 15).

2. A vow or voluntary offering. This may be eaten on the same day, or on the morrow; but not on the third day. Here service is indicated. It is also joined to thanksgiving in Heb. xiii. 16, where the passage quoted above is followed by the charge:—"But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." The third day is resurrection, manifestation, and reward; therefore, the two days are the time for partaking of the peace-offering, whether in enjoying the peace or ministering it. But the third day is judgment.

An animal not quite perfect, may be accepted for a free-will offering, but not for a vow (Lev. xxii. 23).

The flesh that toucheth an unclean thing may not be eaten. The perfect purity and acceptability of the sacrifice, known and understood, can alone give peace (vii. 19).

No one having uncleanness may eat of it. The con-

sciousness of remaining defilement is a barrier to peace (vii. 20).

All that eat thereof shall be clean. Our partaking of Christ is the only thing that gives the confidence of perfect purity before God. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

As to the peace offering generally, there is a further ordinance (vii. 28), and apparently a very special one. Forafter "the law of the peace offering" had been previously given amongst the others, this is introduced by "the Lord spake unto Moses."

"He that offereth the sacrifice of his peace offerings unto the Lord shall bring his oblation unto the Lord of the sacrifice of his peace offerings." This seems like a repetition of the same thing, perhaps implying that, when the Lord speaks of peace, He means true full peace. Not a mere probability, for there is no rest in that: peace is either in a sense perfect, or it is not peace at all. This seems to be implied in what follows:—"His own hands shall bring the offerings of the Lord made by fire." The question of peace is one which none can settle for another; it is altogether a personal matter, and the only basis of it is the knowledge of perfect acceptance with God, which is signified in "the offerings made by fire."

He shall bring *the fat with the breast*. The fat, according to the manner, to be burnt; but the breast to be first "waved for a wave offering before the Lord," and then given to Aaron and his sons. This seems to denote a special and intimate participation in the offering. The acceptance is shown in the portion burnt. But in the breast Aaron and his sons partake of that which was waved before the Lord. This is a more special partaking of the peace. The knowledge of acceptance is peace *with*

God. The feeding upon this wave breast is feeding on God's waved portion of the offering, and is the peace of God (John xiv. ; Phil. iv.).

It was the breast, that part which is the seat of the affections and understanding, and also the place whence *evil* proceeds in man (Mark vii. 21). It was on the breast, too, that the High Priest bore the names of the tribes.

But there was another portion appointed for him of the sons of Aaron who "offered the blood and the fat." (Probably Aaron himself waved the wave offering. See ix. 21.) This was the shoulder for an heave offering, which seems to denote individual blessing to the priest in whose hands the blood and the fat were. The shoulder appears to imply the place of strength, and the bearing of burdens ; and if so, it was the Lord's—an heave offering. And thus it is that, while "every man shall bear his own burden," it is the privilege of each to "cast that burden on the Lord," as it is said, "Be careful for nothing . . . and the peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds." But as to the fuller blessing shown above, it is said, "the God of peace shall be with you."

VER. 34. We are now told that these portions—the wave breast and heave shoulder—are given to Aaron the priest and his sons by a statute for ever. And again (ver. 35), that "this is the anointing of Aaron and of his sons . . . in the day that He anointed them." For it is in the Holy Ghost alone that we have power, as anointed priests, to have communion with the holy things of God. And thus He is the comforter, taking of the things of Christ, and showing them unto us. "And in me ye have peace."

In all the wondrous variety of history and type,

the Holy Spirit has testified of Christ, of the sufferings and the glory. And from these revelations we should be ever learning, while we are here in the fellowship of His sufferings, and proving the sufficiency of His grace, which will bring us on from strength to strength, and, by the contemplation of His glory, change us into the same image; so that we shall know the power of His resurrection, and the peace that passeth all understanding.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SIN OFFERING.

THE sin offering is characterised by its name. But it is not wilful sin that is here specified; it is that which is done "through ignorance." And the offering is appointed for the guilty when they become conscious of their sinfulness.

VER. 3. The question of consciousness of the sin is not mentioned in this first part of the ordinance, which deals with the Priest. For he must have been well aware of the conditions of a sin offering, since one had been offered for him when he was "hallowed" (Exod. xxix.).

We may here remark that, when the priest was hallowed, the blood was put on the altar of burnt offering.

Then, in the present instance (iv. 6), it is brought into the tabernacle, and sprinkled before the vail, his place of service. Also it is put on the altar of incense which signifies prayer. Afterwards (Lev. xvi.), in the sin offering for the high-priest when going to the holiest, it is brought into the holiest, with a cloud of incense, and sprinkled upon and before the mercy-seat.

If the priest sin "according to the sin of the people." Though a priest he yet partakes, alike with all, of sinfulness and infirmity (Heb. v. 2), and, from his very standing as a priest, knows that it is so, and that he has need of the cleansing offering. His offering shall be a young bullock; such is his apprehension of the value of

Christ as the sin-offering. It shall be brought and killed as the burnt-offering. The blood is taken to the Tabernacle of the congregation, and sprinkled seven times before the vail. This is the place of the priest's service, and there is need that sin should be perfectly put away there, and that he should know it; it is a holy place. And this is the place of our service—the place where the blessings are given to the Church, and where the Church exhibits the manifold wisdom of God.

He shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense. This is prayer, and we know that He heareth us. Nearness to the divine presence makes the knowledge of the cleansing blood precious; for even our prayers are defiled.

But "*all the blood shall be poured out at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering.*" For this is the place where the sin and defilement were contracted and abound; there must be cleansing here before we go a step further. A portion of the animal is to be taken—the same as that from the peace offering—and burnt on the altar of burnt offering. It is not said to be a sweet savour (though every aspect of the offering of Jesus was intrinsically so before God), but it was accepted; its being burnt on the altar showed that. But although it was accepted, yet *there was sin* connected with it, that which is hateful to God; and thus it might not be a sweet savour, or at least might not be declared to be so.

The whole bullock was to be burnt with fire without the camp, to mark it as an unclean thing. Nevertheless it was to be burnt in a *clean place*, and was pronounced most holy (vi. 25). Thus was the holy One of God, Who knew no sin, made *sin* for us, and, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate, and was

for a moment utterly forsaken of God, when He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" But such was the intrinsically holy character of this offering that whatever touched the flesh, or was sprinkled by the blood, became holy, whether it was a man, or a vessel, or a garment.

VER. 11. We here have particular mention of the parts of the bullock which were to be burnt without the camp. *The skin*—that which in the burnt offering was for the priest. It is not, however, the mere knowledge of sin put away that yields us a robe of covering; but the sense of perfect righteousness and acceptance. *The flesh*—the whole mass, except that which was to indicate God's acceptance and knowledge of the most holy thing. *His head*, that which characterised it. So Christ was in all things like unto His brethren, a man. But His "visage was more marred than any man's;" the ravages of sin imputed were there. *His legs, his inwards, and dung*. That which in the burnt offering was washed and shown, though in the midst of defilement, to have no taint of it, was here with all its defilement to be destroyed. For He hath not only made an atonement for sinners, but, as it is more fully and expressively declared, "He hath put away *sin* by the sacrifice of Himself." "He bore our sins in His own body," &c. Therefore it was proclaimed to the whole world that, "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The sin offering for the priest or congregation was burnt according to the ordinance (vi. 30), since the blood was brought into the tabernacle. Our communion is not specially with the act thus signified; for Jesus entered Himself alone with His own blood into the heavens for us (Heb. ix. 12; iv. 14).

But that offering whose blood was not brought into the tabernacle was to be eaten. (See x. 18.)

The greater blessing is, however, evidently for the priest that offers it; this is the individual apprehension of Christ in His fulness and perfection.

VER. 13. *The whole congregation.* Their offering, as that of the priest, was a young bullock. The Church's apprehension of Christ is the full apprehension, as taught by the Spirit of God: for she is considered to be the body, the bride, who would simply echo the voice of the Spirit's testimony to Christ. The identification of the congregation, or the impartation of their sin, was by the elders laying on their hands. Thus it is that a few and not the many are the depositaries of the full measure of understanding. These are appointed teachers in the Church, and the character of the mass will ever be formed by the power given to, and exercised faithfully by, those whom the Lord has gifted.

But the Church as such needs, and has, the full and perfect Christ, and knows it. And all the consequent blessings of sin put away, perfect acceptance, and an inheritance of glory, are hers. The individual intelligence is another thing.

The blood, as in the offering for the priests, was to be sprinkled before the vail. For the Church's place as seen of God, and declared by Him, is in the heavenlies, and her service there: for she is a royal priesthood. The remainder of the ordinance is exactly the same as that for the priest.

VER. 22. *When a ruler hath sinned, his offering shall be a kid of the goats.* Neither gift, nor knowledge, nor power, is of itself communion, or realisation of the value and preciousness of Christ in the soul. This is the por-

tion of the priest and the Church. It comes from what God has made us to be, not from what He has given to us to use for others: though the latter will generally be used in power in proportion to our understanding of the former.

The blood was not to be carried into the tabernacle. It is the priest whom God has appointed to go there, and there the Church is blessed with all spiritual blessings. But no difference of condition as to power, gifts, and knowledge, gives any advantage in this respect.

VER. 27. "*If any one of the common people,*" that is, any individual of the general mass. In this case the appointed offering was a female. Here is a glimpse of the Church in her blessed service of helping in communion the weak. But this is but a feeble apprehension of Christ, and its communion is but with earthlies: the blood goes no further than the altar of burnt offering. It is remarkable that, in this instance alone of the ordinance of the sin offering, the part burnt on the altar is said to be a sweet savour. Here is surely a shining forth of the grace of God to His poor and weak ones. There may be much of ignorance and weakness, but there is Christ, and that is ever, as here it is *said* to be, "a sweet savour unto the Lord."

But in this instance the victim is either a kid of the goats or a lamb. This has been noticed before in the ordinance of the burnt offering. Here the only difference in the ordinance is the omission in the latter case of the declaration that it is a sweet savour. Probably in the lamb (*vid. sup.*) there is more understanding, and this, though not expressed, is known, or may be known.

In the two latter instances the blood was to be put on

the horns of the altar of burnt offering (as in the former on that of incense). This was the highest point of the altar, and was, as it were, an invitation to those who *were afar off to approach with safety.*

CHAPTER V.

THE TRESPASS OFFERING (LEV. v. vi. 1-7).

IN the ordinances of the burnt offering, the meat offering, and the peace offering, the offerings are not specially of commandment, but voluntary. "If any man of you," &c. But in the sin offering, the occasion is declared. "If any soul shall sin . . . and be guilty, then let him bring," or "then he shall bring," &c. For though that which was signified in the three former offerings was both needed, and to be desired; yet in the two latter, the righteousness of God, as the just Judge and Avenger of *wrong*, made the requirement of positive necessity and commandment. For in these cases there was sin, and without shedding of blood there could be no remission; for the blood was given by God to make atonement (xvii. 11).

The details of the trespass offering are given in chap. v. vi. 1-7: while the general "law" may be found in vii. 1-7. A similar arrangement has been observed in the previous offerings. The general law is mostly in accordance with that for the sin offering that was to be eaten. The animal was to be killed where the burnt offering was slain, and the blood sprinkled round about the altar.

This is an important link of connection both in place and circumstance, showing all the offerings united in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was at once the altar, the priest, and the sacrifice; the antitypical and perfect fulfilment of all.

The parts to be offered on the altar are the same as those of the lamb for the peace offering. It is an offering made by fire, and though not said to be a sweet savour, it is pronounced most holy.

Every male among the priests shall eat of it in the holy place, and, as before in the sin offering, "there is one law for them: the priest that maketh atonement there-with shall have it" (Lev. vii. 7).

Thus far as to the law specified in vii. 1-7. We have atonement for the trespass, acceptance of the offering, and participation in it, feeding upon it—upon that which had atoned, and had been accepted.

In the special directions for the ordinance, and the occasions on which it is commanded to be offered, we have, in the first place, three instances given.

I. *The hearing the voice of swearing*, or the adjuration of the priest, as to the knowledge of some sin committed by another, and not uttering it.

II. *The touching of any unclean thing.*

III. *Swearing, pronouncing with the lips to do good or evil.*

I. The unrebuked observance of sin in others is sin and a trespass against the Lord. Therefore the Lord Jesus challenged the Jews who stood round about the woman taken in adultery, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." They did not dare to accept the challenge, and were thus self-condemned; for He only bade them do what the law commanded. But He Himself, when brought before the high priest and council, stood unconvicted of sin even by false witnesses. Nor had He any sin to confess there, of His own or others, before those who, according to the law, were in God's place to punish it; for He came to put away sin, and though He would

bear it all, was Himself spotless. And so, to the adjuration of the high priest, the only one which could be presented to Him, He confesses Himself the Son of God. Nor was there ever another who could thus meet the adjuration by the living God.

II. The touching or coming in contact with defilement. Our condition in this respect is shown, as in the former, by contrast with the Lord Jesus Christ, Who alone could come into the midst of defilement, and live in daily contact with it, without pollution: but in our own case the pollution cleaves to us, and is a trespass in the sight of God, the Holy One.

III. Swearing, &c. In this third instance also, our condition is strongly marked by contrast with Him Who knew no sin, but perfectly understood and was conformed to the will of God in all things. Vows were appointed or permitted under the law; but the very principle of any vow is here shown to have sin, to come of evil, and to need atonement. To purpose to do evil is in itself sin. And so the swearing to do good by those who have no power to do it, and consequently fail in that which they have sworn, is also a trespass (Matt. v. 34).

In such cases, then, the trespass offering was commanded as soon as the guilt was known, and confession of the sin was required. The trial of ourselves, in any one of these instances, by the Word of God will soon reveal to us our trespasses. And although in none of the examples given is the sin of a wilful or presumptuous character, yet it is actual sin; for it is the outworking of that which is within us. Thus, then, it is said that, for his sin which he hath sinned he shall bring his trespass offering, "a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a *sin offering*."

The Church, as noticed before, is probably in question here. And so we have not the perfect sin offering, the bullock without blemish ; for this is an instance in which, not merely the sin in nature and in principle is in question (God only understands that fully ; while we judge of it rather by that which was required to put it away—the precious blood of Christ), but the actual proof and experience of it.

And now we have a distinct mention of that which has been implied before :—“ If he be not able to bring a lamb,” &c. This concession probably points to the effect of sin in debasing, enfeebling, and rendering dim, our very apprehension of its evil, as well as of the holiness of God, and the perfection of Christ. In case of poverty, then, it is permitted to bring two turtle-doves, or young pigeons, one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering. The sin offering was to be offered first, a hint by the way that atonement for sin must go before acceptance. As in other instances of this kind, there is implied a slight deficiency in the apprehension of the blessing. The blood in the general ordinance is to be sprinkled round about upon the altar, but here upon the side of the altar. So in other particulars. The bird is not to be divided asunder ; it is a sin offering. Nor is it said where it should be offered ; but none of it was placed upon the altar of burnt offering. The second bird is then offered, according to the manner (i. 14) for a *burnt offering* : and then the atonement is made, and the sin forgiven.

But further ; *if he be not able to bring these things*, there is a provision made ; for God would not have the consciousness of unatoned sin remaining in any of His children. Therefore, he may bring “ the *tenth part of an ephah of fine flour* for a sin offering ;” but no oil or

frankincense must be put on it. Of this a memorial is to be burnt for an offering by fire; and, the atonement being made, the remnant shall be the priest's for a *meat offering*. Thus the trespass offering might be of fine flour as the meat offering; and the understanding of the weakest and the simplest was considered for the end proposed—that of removing the consciousness of guilt. There was no blood in this case; yet there was some, if but a very dim, understanding of the work of Christ: and this is also indicated by the specified quantity of flour to be used, viz., the tenth part of an ephah, which was merely the quantity requisite for daily food. The Israelites gathered each an omer of manna for the day, and the Lord tells us (Exod. xvi. 36) that “an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.” We *must* have a daily knowledge of our portion in Christ, however imperfect it may be in detail; or otherwise, there must remain the consciousness of guilt not put away, the terror of unpardoned sin. In this last offering, then, there is participation in *Christ*, and a knowledge of acceptance in the memorial burnt. But there is no frankincense; the fragrance that is entirely God's is not there. Neither is there any oil, a deficiency which may perhaps point to the Holy Ghost grieved or quenched, so that there is no realising sense of His presence remaining. Thus, in the substitution of the meat offering for the sin offering, there is pardon known; but many things are wanting, and the sense of forgiveness is feeble, no more than a daily portion.

VER. 14. We have then another case specified in which the trespass offering would be required, that of “*sin through ignorance in the holy things of the Lord.*” This is marked as a special ordinance by the preface, “The Lord spake unto Moses.”

In chap. xxii. 14, the sin is explained to be the eating of holy things by one who is not a priest. Generally, it would be the doing anything unconsciously which was lawful only to the anointed priests. And the sin is probably manifested in us when we attempt to partake of the privileges which belong to us as priests only, and are not realising the character in which we are permitted to do so, but have no remembrance or consciousness that the holy anointing oil of God is upon us.

For this sin the trespass offering is a ram, a male of the flock, to be offered in the usual manner.

But there were also amends *to be made according to the estimation of the priest, by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary; and the fifth part was to be added thereto.* Probably this may show that there is no advantage, but rather loss, in our heedless and thoughtless assumption of the holy privileges to which we are called. For God has appointed that *priests* alone shall enjoy these, men upon whom both the cleansing blood and the holy oil have been placed. There is often a hasty freedom, a rashness, in our familiarity with holy things, which seems to be here rebuked; for a measure of it, perhaps, cleaves to all of us, and requires the special atonement of the trespass offering.

In chap. xxvii. we learn that all estimations were to be by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary; and that, when a beast, house, or field, were to be redeemed, a fifth of the value should be added to the estimate. It is said that a shekel is twenty gerahs. And in Exod. xxx., the atonement for the soul, when the children of Israel were numbered, was half of this shekel. Again, in Numb. iii. 44, for the first born of the children of Israel, which were more than the Levites, the redemp-

tion was five such shekels. And we learn in Ezek. xlv. 10-12, that these quantities are spoken of by the Lord as constituting *just* balances, &c.

Hence we may gather that, while the place of privilege and blessing into which the Lord has brought His people is altogether of grace, yet that He deals with them, when they are there, in righteousness. "The time is come when judgment must begin at the house of God." "The Father judgeth without respect of persons, according to every man's work." "He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption."

VER. 17. The next case is:—"If a soul sin, and commit any of those things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord."

This seems to be, in some respects, a summary of the whole, and to show the general character of the trespass offering.

God has given directions for the walk of His people in all things; but there may be, and there is, ignorance of the mind of the Lord, so that "in many things we offend all." But, though a man wist it not, yet he is guilty, and shall bear his iniquity. The atonement made for him is declared to be concerning his ignorance, and the offering is a ram, while the ordinance is general.

One perfect man there was Who could "bridle his tongue:" for in Him was no guile, and iniquity was not found in His mouth. He is our trespass offering (vi. 1-7).

In the two former instances, the trespass against the Lord consisted in "sin through ignorance in the holy things of the Lord," and in "doing things forbidden by the commandments of the Lord." These are classed under one head. The next is the subject of a separate ordinance. In it the trespass against the Lord consists in a man's lying

to his neighbour, &c.; but the trespass is specially said to be against the Lord.

These, though not presumptuous sins, are manifest *acts* of sin, and on that account are, perhaps, specially said to be trespasses against the Lord. Consequently, this instance is a still further unfolding of the grace of God and the sufficiency of Christ, showing that His atoning and cleansing blood reaches in its effects to all sin. It is the refusal to bring the trespass-offering that would alone leave any in the awful condition of being unpardoned before God. This is the sacrifice; but there remaineth no other, and the entire disregard of this and continuing in sin would be treading under foot the blood of the Son of God, counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing.

The sins now mentioned are those natural workings of the evil and corruption within, against which we are warned in the preceptive portions of the epistles to the Churches. The imperfection of these offerings is shown in their having to be offered continually. But we know the one perfect offering, and are therefore in circumstances to understand what the Lord here sets before us concerning it in type. Moreover, we know that the sacrifice in which we are privileged to partake is of Him "which was dead and is alive, and behold! He liveth for evermore."

And upon the ground of this knowledge it is said to us (Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 9), in immediate connection with our participation in the sacrifice death and resurrection of Christ, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour," "seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

But generally in this offering, the sins specified seem to be the giving way to the natural evil and selfishness of the heart by acting on its suggestions. There is mention of falsehood, breach of trust, violence, and deception. The character of the sin is also shown in this, as in the two former cases, by the command that restitution be made by estimation, with the fifth part added, according to the estimation by the shekel of the sanctuary, which was *just*. The doing of such things is not only shown to be entirely unprofitable, but to be also attended with actual loss, and the loss in this ordinance is of silver, which is purity.

Through this offering the trespass against God is forgiven, but we are warned that he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons" (Col. iii. 24).

The offering is "*a ram without blemish . . . with thy estimation.*" The latter direction must be diligently carried out. For otherwise the trespass would become persistent sin, wilful and presumptuous. The remainder of the ordinance is general.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAWS OF THE OFFERINGS (LEV. VI. 8-30).

IN this portion we have, according to the summary in vii. 37, "the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings."

VER. 8-13. *The law of the burnt offering.* "It is the burnt offering for the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning;" "the fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." This is the declaration of perfect unceasing acceptance until its manifestation in resurrection, in the morning. It continues during the darkness of the whole night.

VER. 10. *He shall take up the ashes from the altar, and put them beside the altar, and whilst doing this he shall have on his linen garments.* While engaged with the remains of that which had been taken up by the fire to God, at the altar, and before the door of the tabernacle, that is, in the sight of God, the priest must be clothed in those garments which were indicative of the purity in which he was called to minister in the tabernacle. But when he was removing the ashes farther away into a clean place, he must put on other garments. The reason assigned for a like action in Ezek. xlv. 19 is, "They shall not sanctify the people with their garments." These garments of linen were for glory and for beauty, and to

minister before the Lord in the tabernacle and at the altar (Exod. xxviii. 39-43; Lev. xvi. 4; Exod. xx. 26). But they belong only to the holy place before the Lord. The holiness, the glory, the beauty, is neither known nor seen on earth. The priest when taking the ashes away was clothed like other men, and so appeared in their sight. But the place to which the ashes were taken was a clean place without the camp. Thither the body of the sin offering was carried to be burnt, thither also we are commanded to go with Jesus, bearing His reproach; for there He suffered in order that He might sanctify the people with His own blood.

VER. 12. *But the priest shall burn wood on the altar every morning.* So should we feel daily the power of Christ's resurrection, and hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

He shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings. And this the Lord gives as part of the law of the burnt offering. For perfect acceptance and perfect peace go together, and our happiness consists in the unceasing realisation of both.

VER. 14. *The law of the meat offering.* In the law of the burnt offering, the general command is addressed to Aaron and his sons. In that of the meat offering, it is said, "the sons of Aaron shall offer it;" and afterwards, "the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat." Equal participation in that upon which we feed is here indicated. The memorial was to be burnt, as before noticed; the remainder to be eaten by Aaron and his sons with unleavened bread, in the holy place. So that the special point in this "law" is the equal right of all who have the anointing to feed upon Christ, but only in the holy place (Numb. xviii. 10), and with the unleavened

bread of sincerity and truth. The unleavened bread shows not only what Christ is, but what we should be (1 Cor. v. 8).

This is said to be the portion given to the priests of the offerings made by fire ; so that they fed on that which was known to be acceptable with God.

"It is a statute for ever." For it is in Christ that we shall ever know our acceptance with God, and our enjoyment of Him.

"Every one that toucheth them shall be holy." The Lord says, "I in them, and Thou in me." "As He is, so are we," being thus made partakers of the divine nature. For while Christ was made in all things like unto His brethren, He has made them in all things like unto Himself. Our nature is still human ; but in Him it is holy, spiritual, divine, restored to the image of God. And whereas holiness is here said to be the result, not of feeding upon the offerings in the holy place, but of simply coming into contact with them ; so the virtue and power which is in Christ flows forth at the slightest touch of faith.

VER. 19. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 'This is the offering of Aaron and of his sons,' which they shall offer unto the Lord, in the day when he is anointed."

The directions for their consecration had been previously given (Exod. xxix.). The command to carry out these directions and its fulfilment may be found in Lev. viii. Now the laws of the offerings in chaps. vi. and vii. are given, in the first two instances, in the order in which the ordinances stand—first the burnt offering, then the meat offering. Then the special offering of Aaron and his sons, on the day of their anointing, intervenes. After-

wards the other laws, the sin offering, trespass offering, and peace offering, follow; but not in the order of the ordinances.

The anointing of the priests could only be allowed on the ground of the perfect acceptance of Christ; and, therefore, the offering connected with it is placed after the burnt offering and meat offering. Nevertheless sin needed to be put away, trespass forgiven, and peace enjoyed; therefore the offerings necessary for these ends come in afterwards. In the ordinance of consecration, as well as in the history of it, the oil of anointing is first used, then the blood of the sin offering is shed, and afterwards that of the ram of consecration is applied to the priest. Where the oil is, there must be the cleansing blood; but the value of the blood can only be understood by the Holy Ghost. The acceptance was declared before the atonement, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." And the Lord breathed on His disciples the Holy Ghost before Pentecost, before they knew that His blood cleanseth from all sin. And, in this consecration, all that was needed was taken together to the door of the tabernacle. Although the anointing was first to be done, yet the sin offering, &c., were standing ready. But by the order of proceeding the character of *the* great High Priest was shown forth. *He* needed no atonement for Himself. He was the perfect One, and the Holy Ghost in a bodily shape abode upon Him. But He *took* sin upon Him, and hence the subsequent sacrifice for sin.

The quality of this meat offering is marked, as in the general ordinance, by the specification of fine flour: the quantity, as we have before seen, marks it as the individual portion of a day. But the day is marked by the division, the morning and the night. The morning is the

light of resurrection life, the night is the darkness of all besides. Equal portions belong to each of these divisions, and for each they are needed. It is a meat-offering perpetual, God's acceptance of us in our participation in the acceptance of Christ. And thus the meat-offering is a burnt-offering. Our acceptance is in Christ, but we are ourselves accepted.

The consecration meat offering was of that kind which, according to the ordinance (chap. ii.), was to be baken in a pan, broken in pieces, and then to have oil poured upon it. It was made of the fine flour, and broken in pieces for the observation of God, and for the better application of the oil and of the fire. And it is said to be a sweet savour unto the Lord, which was the special characteristic of the burnt offering, and of the memorial which was to be burnt of all the others, except the sin offering. There is this difference, however, between it and the intrinsically pure and perfect memorial of the meat offering — there is no mention made of the frankincense. This essential fragrance is of Christ alone.

It shall be wholly burnt, it shall not be eaten. It is in Christ that we are thus wholly acceptable, and it is on Him we feed, not on ourselves. The knowledge and power of our acceptance is not to be maintained by seeking to rest on anything in ourselves, even though we do thus become through Christ a sweet savour unto the Lord. Whatever measure of satisfaction we find in ourselves, and not in Christ, is just that which is not acceptable before God, not a sweet savour by fire. Therefore God has commanded that this offering shall be wholly burnt.

Our salvation is wholly of God. "We were dead in trespasses and sins ;" "but God, Who is rich in mercy, for

His great love wherewith He loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ."

"He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."

Hence the order of these laws: first, the burnt and meat offerings—Christ's acceptance for us; then, the priest's meat offering for a sweet savour by fire. But sin put away must be recognised as the basis of all. So next we have the law of the sin offering.

VER. 24. *The law of the sin offering.* This is introduced by a special ordinance. In the burnt and meat offerings the directions were to be given to Aaron and his sons: this is also the case with the sin offering. But in the priest's meat offering, the directions are addressed to Moses.

The sin offering is to be killed in the place where the burnt offering is slain, and is most holy. This shows at the outset that, whatever might be subsequently done with the victim, it was seen and approved of God, having been presented before Him.

"*The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it:*" but afterwards it is said, "All the males among the priests shall eat thereof." Such a command has been previously noticed as giving an equal portion to all, but a speciality of blessing to the one who is most concerned in the offering. But this participation in the sin offering by the priests seems to signify much more than the mere knowledge of its value to ourselves: it points to our ministry as priests on behalf of others.

And in this, as in all things, the Lord Jesus is our example. "In all our afflictions He was afflicted:" "He bore our sins:" "He was touched with a feeling of our

infirmities : ” He carried them all before God, and brought us back the comfort and the joy of His own atonement and intercession. In conformity with His example, “ we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren.” But such a power of self-sacrifice involves an intimate sympathy with the infirmities of our brethren, the taking their sin to ourselves, into our own hearts, the bearing it before God, the pleading with Him for them, and the bringing back from Him of comfort and peace. Herein is the true communion of the sin offering. But it can only be obtained in the holy place. We cannot, whilst walking in the flesh and its narrow selfishness, know anything of the power of the sympathy of the blessed Jesus, but only in the place where all testifies to the grace that has wrought a full deliverance for us.

The eating of the sin offering is especially marked as a priestly act : for the directions are given immediately to Aaron and his sons, and the participation is restricted to the “ males among the priests.” It is a participation in that which was rejected, and burnt outside the camp as an unclean thing.

VER. 27. *But whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy.* This shows that, when sin is put away, righteousness remains (Rom. iv. 6, 7). Sin effaced the divine likeness in which God created man : but Christ, having first become sin for us, afterwards restored the lost image, and in Him God looks upon His people as holy.

But here the reference is to things rather than persons *Whatsoever shall touch the flesh shall be holy.* And then follow directions as to garments on which the blood had been sprinkled, and which were to be washed in the holy place. An earthen vessel in which the offering had been sodden was to be broken ; a brazen pot to be scoured and

rinsed in water. The time is not yet come when the result of sin put away shall be manifested on these and similar things.

"The earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waiteth for the *manifestation* of the sons of God." The present effect of the blood of the sin offering is holiness, separation. The holy garments and the holy vessels belong to the holy place alone. And generally, in regard to all the offerings, communion and participation were only to be had in the holy place. Now the priestly garments, and indeed all the vessels of the ministry, were sprinkled with the blood. But an ordinary garment could not be allowed to participate in this sprinkling, nor a common vessel. And so it is now; spiritual things are spiritually discerned, the natural man knoweth them not.

A common garment is that which meets the natural eye of all. An earthen vessel is that which is most commonly used among men. We are said to be earthen vessels containing the treasure, that the excellency of the power may be of God; and these vessels also must be broken.

The brazen vessels were appointed for ministry. These are strong; but the strength is spiritual, not carnal, nor otherwise than spiritually known and exercised.

Indeed it is in the Church only, and not in the world, that sin is put away and the blood in its cleansing power abides.

But keeping more directly in view Him Who is ever in the mind of the Holy Ghost, we may trace Christ and His work in these vessels of ministry, in which the offering was prepared that others might partake. For He was an earthen vessel in that He took upon Himself our nature, and a brazen vessel as receiving strength from.

God for the ministry to which He was appointed. The former was broken in the suffering unto death ; and in the latter He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and was made perfect. So in our own case there must be death to the flesh, the breaking of the earthen vessel ; but we shall receive strength from above to endure the purifying process, the fellowship of His sufferings. And of this process the communion of the sin offering is no inconsiderable part, involving, as it does, a sense, not merely of our own sins, but also of those of our brethren.

“ Who is sufficient for these things ? ” is the question of one who knew what they were ; but “ we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” He was made partaker of our nature, and we of His, that we might bear the sins of each other even as He has borne the iniquity of us all.* And thus “ we are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake,” and bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Compare 2 Cor. i. 4-7 with iv. 7-12. We, too, like the apostle Paul, may become vessels of ministry for the preparation of the sin offering of which all may participate ; for it is the portion of “ all the males among the priests.” We can thus bear one another’s sin, and, carrying it before the Lord, bring back the consolation. Paul said, “ Death worketh in us, but life in you ; ” while the result is “ the life of Jesus manifest in our dying flesh,” in the earthen vessel. But the life must be referred to the brazen vessel ; and, when “ scoured and rinsed,” Paul could, in a certain sense, take the place of Christ. He appeals to his own example of

* Only, of course, in the sense of sorrowing and interceding for the sins of our brethren. We cannot imitate Christ in His work of atonement.

holiness and purity, and says, "Be ye followers of me." He was a "vessel unto honour, cleansed and made fit for the Master's use."

But we must not forget that the sin offering, which was to be thus prepared and eaten, is that of which the blood had not been brought into the tabernacle. For there the Lord Jesus stood alone. But we are left, as it were, to prove and exemplify the practical power of the sin offering. And thus Paul further speaks of "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, . . . for His body's sake, which is the Church;" and this he would do according to the dispensation of God which was given to *him*, to fulfil the Word of God (*πληρῶσαι τὸν λόγον, &c.*). It is to be remarked, too, that this special case is not like the *ordinance*, that "all the priests *shall* eat of it;" but it is a direction as to a vessel in which the flesh might have been sodden. It is not a general and mutual duty of priests, but something that specially refers to an individual, to a peculiar case of ministry. It may point to a service which would lead to the result of the service of the Lord Himself—to a violent death.

The brazen vessels were for the service of the tabernacle, but could only be used in the court. They show forth spiritual capacity and strength, not as the gold and the silver for the interior of the tabernacle, but are the manifestation of strength for spiritual service on earth.

The two vessels give an exact delineation of our character on earth, weak and failing in its natural standing, but strong in the spirit and power of the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus.

Lastly, our connection with that which has put away sin must lead us to the practical putting it away in our-

selves. And this will ever be death to the flesh, a bruising and breaking down of nature, and, at the same time, a purifying of ourselves by the Holy Spirit, and a bringing out of the spiritual and divine nature which is born in every believer.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAW OF THE TRESPASS OFFERING.

VER. 1. *It is most holy.* Whether for sin or trespass, this is the character of God's offering: no other can He receive. The offering of the Lord Jesus was for our trespass, not for Himself: He is ever most holy.

VER. 2. It must be *killed where the burnt offering is killed*—before the Lord. The variety in the offerings specifies our needs, and the *One* who could meet them all. Whether the putting away of sin, the forgiveness of trespass, or the acceptance of worship and access, be the requirement, it is in Christ, and in Him only, that it can be obtained.

The blood is to be sprinkled round about upon the altar. It must be spread out, as it were, before God, to show that it is there, that the sacrifice has been killed, that blood has been shed, even the blood of a most holy thing.

VER. 3-5. The portion for the fire on the altar of burnt offering is that which was usually burnt, but with the addition of the rump. This seems to point to something more being required than the general acknowledgment that it was God's; perhaps, because there is not here a question of sin in general, but of a special act of offence or wrong for which restitution must be made.

VER. 6. Like the sin offering it was for the equal participation of the priests, for "in many things we offend all." It is to be eaten in the holy place, and there is a

second warning that it is most holy, as a fact necessary to be remembered in partaking of it. It is a most holy thing before God: we must not have a lower estimation of it.

VER. 7. The law which commands that the offering should be the special portion of the priest that offers it is here declared to be as that of the sin offering. This, as before noticed, seems to indicate individual blessing to the one specially concerned. But in the fullest sense the Lord Jesus was the priest, and though He was also the offering, yet as being the priest it belonged to Him. Hence it is in Him and from Him that the equal participation of all the priests comes.

He is the one priest to God, the great priest; and in Him we also are priests to God.

VER. 8. Then follows the law respecting the special portion in the burnt offering of the priest that offers it. This is the skin, which seems to represent the covering afforded to us by Christ's perfect righteousness.

VER. 9. And so with respect to the meat offering. He is the offering, and it is He Who gives to each their portion. In John vi. 51, He says, "the bread that I will give is my flesh." (Compare Matt. xi. 27, 28).

VER. 10. But "every meat offering mingled with oil, and dry, shall all the sons of Aaron have, one as much as another." And thus Christ distributes to all alike an equal communion and participation in the blessings which are His own. In chap. ii. 3, the remnant of the meat-offering is said to belong to "Aaron and his sons."

The offerings that were dry were the meat offering in the place of the sin offering for trespass (chap. v. 11), and the tenth of an ephah of barley meal in the offering of jealousy (Numb. v. 15).

VER. 11-21. *The law of the sacrifice of peace offerings* has been already discussed. There is, however, at the close of the chapter, another special ordinance for "him that offereth the sacrifice of his peace offerings." But we must first notice the verses which significantly intervene.

VER. 22. "*Ye shall eat no manner of fat, &c.*" Before the question of peace, which is the result of the offerings (Col. i. 20), can be finally settled, there must be a clear understanding and acknowledgment that all is of God.

All the fat is the Lord's, and of the beasts that were offered in sacrifice none of it might be eaten. The benefit, the blessing, is ours; but the glory is God's, for our sufficiency is of Him. And this we need to have ever clearly before the mind. For it is just because the blessings are so great that there is danger of our being lifted up, exalted above measure, and thinking that our own hands have gotten them. And then the sure result would be failure in realising the power of the blessing; for peace cannot continue with us, if we turn aside to ourselves. And the end of not distinguishing God's portion will be destruction;—"The soul that eateth it shall be cut off from his people."

"The fat of the beast that dieth of itself, and the fat of that which is torn with beasts, may be used in any other use: but ye shall in no wise eat of it."

The excellency of God's sacrifice belongs to God alone, and is for the fire of His altar. What is our own we may use in any other way, but neither offer it to God, nor eat it. Whatever we have by nature is of God, but it cannot be accepted by Him. It is either that which is under the power of death—"dieth of itself"; or that which is subject to the distracting and evil power of the devil in other ways—"torn with beasts"; indeed it is

both evil, and unfit for any offering to God. Of some use for our needs in this present world it may be ; but let us never expect to find peace in it.

VER. 26. "*Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood.*" For the blood is the life. We are dead in trespasses and sins, and our life, forfeited by guilt, has reverted to God. We must, therefore, be made to feel this loss, and to know that we cannot recover it of ourselves. But God has given the blood for atonement, and will of His own free grace restore life to us in His Son. And thus, if we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, the prohibition of this verse is cancelled : we may all drink of His blood and imbibe life from Him.

"*In any of your dwellings.*" The things around us, wearing the appearance of life and endurance, have a tendency to counteract the truth that we are dwelling in a region of death, and that there is no hope for any person or thing except in Christ.

The penalty of disobedience is the same as for eating the fat—"that soul shall be cut off from his people." The atonement for sin as indispensable to life, and the life itself as coming from God, are equally necessary ; and both are to be found only in Christ, all else being under the power of sin and death.

VER. 28-36. In these verses we have the further and final directions for the peace offering ; but they have been already noticed in the remarks on chap. iii.

VER. 37. "*The law*" of these offerings is, in conclusion, stated to be that "which the Lord commanded Moses in Mount Sinai, in the day that He commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations to the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai."

Thus the first seven chapters of Leviticus treat of the

grace which the Lord manifested to His people, while they knew nothing better than the hopeless condition of law. These are the precepts which He commanded on the mount above the region of law, but which were to be kept in the wilderness beneath.

We have here in detail the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and learn what God is.

With this chapter the first section of the book ends.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONSECRATION OF AARON AND HIS SONS.

IN the previous chapters we have God's ordinances of the offerings, showing the way of access and the place of His presence. "There I will meet with the children of Israel" (Exod. xxix. 43).

In the order of those offerings we had, first, the burnt-offering, showing in itself complete acceptance the privilege of access and worship.

Next, the meat offering, indicating participation, feeding upon that which is pure and acceptable.

Then, the peace offering, exhibiting peace as the result of the other two. Then come the sin and trespass offering. And these as being necessary are not, like the former offerings, voluntary, their need and occasion being known. In God's order these come last; in our need they come first.

God knows the Church as "*chosen in Christ* before the foundation of the world, holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. i. 4). But our entrance into and enjoyment of that knowledge is by the saying, faithful and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners* (1 Tim. i. 15).

Thus, too, in our order of these ordinances the peace-offering comes last of all, for it expresses the result of all the others.

The ordinances of the offerings being concluded, that which follows in natural course is their actual use and application. And for this priests are needed. The offerings were the way of approach to God, the tabernacle was the place, and the priests were the persons by whom the access could be obtained.

But both the place and the persons were defiled, and needed cleansing; and the cleansing virtue was in the blood of the offering.

The separation of Aaron and his sons from the mass of the congregation, as specially chosen of God, marks God's principle of election to this special office and privilege. "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb. v. 4).

VER. 1. Moses is commanded to take Aaron and his sons with all that is needed for their consecration, and to bring them with the whole congregation to the door of the tabernacle. This was what the Lord *commanded* to be done. He never put His people by command under law; but He commands His own purposes of grace.

The position of the congregation with the priests shows the need "all" have for the exercise of the priestly office, and that it is to be exercised alike for "all."

The things that were brought with Aaron were those which were needed, which God had commanded, and which the whole congregation saw as appertaining to priestly consecration.

(1.) *The garments*, directions for making which had been previously given in all particulars (Exod. xxviii.). They were the robes of glory and beauty in which he should minister to the Lord.

(2.) *The anointing oil*. Directions for making this were given in Exod. xxx. 22. It was not to be put upon

man's flesh. It is, generally, the Holy Ghost, and marks all as "*holy*" and "*spiritual*," whether it touch persons or things.

(3.) *A bullock for the sin-offering.* The absolute need of this bullock seems to be indicated by the mention of its use.

(4.) *Two rams.* Their special use is not mentioned. From what has preceded we know that they were animals suitable for several offerings, and what they were to be in this case comes out in course, and marks God's order in the matter. When the sin-offering had been offered, then one of the rams was offered for a burnt-offering, while the other was the ram of consecration.

(5.) *A basket of unleavened bread.* This was for offering and participation. It was a type of the priests' entire devotion of their persons and substance to the service of God. When all things were ready before the door of the tabernacle, Moses called for attention by the words, "This is the thing which the Lord commanded to be done;" and then proceeded with the consecration in the sight of all the people.

VER. 6. "*And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.*"

This represents God's complete act of justification and regeneration, distinct, though not separate, from atonement. Taken in connection with the subsequent anointing with oil it is a type of the birth by water and the Spirit.

In this act Aaron and his sons are taken together; for it is in Him that we are quickened. "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col. ii. 13).

Christ died because we were sinners ; He rose again because we were justified ; and it is from Him in resurrection that a flood of light is thrown by the Holy Ghost upon all the purposes of God. The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

VER. 7. The next act is the investiture of Aaron alone with the holy garments ; the consideration of which in detail belongs more immediately to Exod. xxviii. and xxxix.

The spiritual resurrection life, wherein all service must be done, had been shown in the washing with water, the washing of regeneration ; in this Aaron's sons partook with him. So do we, after having died in the flesh and been quickened in the spirit with Christ, also stand in purity of resurrection in Him.

In this investiture of Aaron alone with the sacred garments, we see the Lord Jesus as alone worthy to take upon Himself the priestly office. And it is only on the ground of His sufficiency that the completeness of the Church in Him is declared to have been known to God before the foundation of the world, even before He had put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

When Aaron has been clothed with the garments of glory and beauty, the anointing and sanctifying of the tabernacle, altar, &c., takes place, and then the anointing of Aaron himself, by pouring the oil upon his head. This was the anointing of his person with the fulness of the Holy Ghost, and had no immediate reference to his garments. Yet the precious ointment is spoken of, in Ps. cxxxiii., as going "down to the skirts of his garments ;" by which we are taught that from Christ our Head all our holy anointing flows.

The anointing of the tabernacle and holy vessels shows

us the preparation of the place of Christ's priestly service and ours. It points to the spiritual character of those heavenly things which He came to reveal (John iii. 12), in which only spiritual natures can have participation.

The tabernacle and all that was therein was anointed; this had reference to things in the heavens.

The altar was sprinkled seven times, which exhibits the spiritual perfection of Christ's work on earth.

The laver and his foot. That wherein the daily ablutions, preparatory to ministry in the holy place, were performed, was anointed even to its foot, the part of it which touched the earth. For we must maintain a spiritual purity before God in all the services of this present life.

The Lord Jesus offered Himself, through the eternal Spirit, without spot to God (Heb. ix. 14). "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

Next came the anointing of Aaron, upon whose head the consecrated oil was poured. And thus he became a type of that Holy One upon Whom the Spirit descended, and Who speaks of Himself as the Son of man Which is in heaven, and Which came down from heaven. His garments, as was before remarked, were not yet consecrated, though the oil from his head might flow down upon them.

The sons of Aaron are then brought forward, and clothed in their priestly garments. And thus far, the following is the order of the ceremonies.

First, the washing of water, by which is indicated the mutual participation of Aaron and his sons in the righteous purity of resurrection life.

Then follows the investiture of Aaron with the garments of that priestly office which he should exercise in

resurrection, and into the fellowship of which he should afterwards bring those who had previously partaken with him of life.

Next comes the hallowing of the place of service and the vessels of ministry.

Then Aaron's own solemn setting apart to the office. "For their sakes I sanctify myself."

Lastly, the investiture of the sons of Aaron with garments of office like unto his own, inferior indeed, yet, like his, for glory and for beauty.

The first clothing given by God to man was the coat of skins, which was merely intended to cover nakedness, and indicated righteousness *given* in grace. But now the garments He gives are for glory and beauty, in which to minister withal in the holy and heavenly place of His own presence.

The full worthiness of the great High Priest having been shown, intimation is given of our being brought into the relationship of like service with Him, on the ground of the fulness that was in Him, even as *He* hath made us priests unto God. But before the actual consecration of the sons can take place, other truths must appear in type.

Aaron must stand in the midst of his sons, and, putting his hand upon the head of the bullock, acknowledge his sin, and thus show forth Him of Whom it is said: "He was made sin for us, Who knew no sin." "It behoved Him to be made in all things like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. ii. 17, 18. See also Heb. v. 1-3).

Christ thus identified Himself with our condition, in

order that He might bring us to partake of His own service as a priest. And so we know in ourselves the heavy burden of sin, and the blessing of sin put away, in order that we may exercise the priestly office of bearing one another's burdens and of interceding one for another.

VER. 14. The bullock is then brought forward to be offered according to the ordinance of the sin offering for the priest (iv. 3-12), and Aaron and his sons lay their hands upon its head.

In this case the blood is not brought into the holy place, but is put upon the altar, and poured out at the bottom of it, to purify, sanctify, and expiate it. For the sinful nature of the priests defiled it even while they were officiating. But the fact that blood is needed in the holy place, and must be sprinkled there also, is not at present mentioned. It had been noticed in the ordinance for the sin offering; but would be best learnt and known in the course and experience of priestly service.

Moreover, it is afterwards revealed that the blood must be sprinkled in the holiest of all; for even there would the presence of the priest cause defilement.

And it is worthy of notice that this last ordinance of sprinkling is introduced soon after the death of Nadab and Abihu, and when the surviving priests had just been reprimanded, because they had omitted to eat the flesh of a sin offering whose blood had not been carried into the tabernacle (compare chap. x. with xvi.). Aaron was thus reminded of the necessity of observing, in every particular, whatsoever the Lord had commanded, and was taught that his shortcomings, even in the holy services, required continual atonement.

Hence we may learn how fully and completely all our

need has been met, and every barrier removed, so that we may draw *nigh* to God *in Christ*; but *only in Him*.

VER. 18. Then follows the offering of the ram *for the burnt offering*.

The sin offering is a *bullock*, the more perfect animal; the burnt offering a *ram*. If we are to be priests, our understanding of sin must be complete, as of that which separates for ever from God. So, too, ought our apprehension of the offering once made for sin to be clear and decided, as of that which has altogether put it away. Otherwise we can have no power for service.

But the sense of acceptance, and of access in worship, may be more or less defective, and is of progressive attainment. A large, but not a full, apprehension of this belongs to the priest; and hence it is represented, not by the bullock, but by the ram.

Aaron and his sons lay their hands upon the ram and identify themselves with it, as with the sin offering; and the sacrifice is then offered according to the usual ordinance for the burnt offering.

The question of sin put away and acceptance with God having been thus settled for Aaron and his sons, their consecration to the office for which they were clothed follows, and the proper offering, the other ram, is brought.

VER. 22. "*The ram of consecration.*" The animals for the consecration and the burnt offering are of the same kind. And our understanding of the character and value of our priesthood will exactly equal our sense of blessing in acceptance and worship.

According to the usual procedure, Aaron and his sons lay their hands on the head of the offering, which is immediately afterwards slain.

The blood is then "put upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot." Afterwards it is applied in like manner to his sons; and then sprinkled upon the altar round about, to consecrate the place of sacrifice and priestly service.

But the blood was put upon Aaron first, that he might be a type of Him Who, though made like unto His brethren, yet had in all things the pre-eminence.

For He, after taking upon Himself our nature, and in it offering the sacrifice, becomes a priest, and thus brings us into a blessed participation of access to God, the Father, making us priests together with Himself. Therefore we are able to draw nigh, within the vail, our hearts being sprinkled from an evil conscience, because sin is put away, and our bodies washed with pure water, cleansed for daily priestly service.

The blood is put first "on the ear." This is the consecration to God of the avenue by which truth finds access to our minds. Therefore it is said, "Let every man be swift to hear;" for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." And the Lord Jesus shows us His own perfect consecration in this respect when He says, "Mine ears hast thou opened." "I speak not of myself." "As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things."

The ear is first consecrated as that by which we receive the wisdom and understanding which are to be the directory of our hands and feet in doing the work of the Lord, and walking in His ways. And thus the application of the blood to ear, hand, and foot, shortly comprehends the whole of our priestly work, which is, to hear from God, and to carry out what we hear in our daily walk and service.

The eye is not consecrated ; nothing that is the object of sight forms any part of our portion, or a subject of priestly ministration. Neither experience nor observation are to be a guide ; but the commandments of God. The Lord Jesus alone can tell us of what He has seen : we hear it from Him.

Nor is the tongue touched with the blood : for the consecration of the ear contains all that is necessary. Let that organ be opened to God, so that the heart may be filled with what is heard from Him, and the right result must follow ; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." But we should be "slow to speak," and careful, when we do open our mouths, to "speak as the oracles of God."

Then follows the application of the blood to *the hand*—that which should, in service, take hold of the holy things of God, the vessels of ministry, and the blood of sprinkling ; and to *the foot*, which treads the holy sanctuary of God's presence.

VER. 25. And now the portion of the animal set apart for the altar of burnt offering is taken, together with one cake of each kind from the basket of unleavened bread for a memorial, according to the ordinance of the meat offering.

The Lord Jesus was not only acceptable in the sight of God in His own person, as in the burnt offering, but also in all His actions, and among them in His consecration of His people as priests. This latter point is marked by the offering of the memorial from the unleavened bread. And not only so, but our participation in the knowledge and understanding of Christ's work is also well pleasing to God, and this is indicated by the participation of Aaron and his sons in the unleavened purity of the meat offering.

In the case of the ram of consecration, in addition to the parts usually appointed to be burnt upon the altar, there is added the shoulder, the place of bearing burdens, the place of strength. For this is a consecration to priesthood; and priests are appointed *for* men. This sets forth both Christ as the great Burden-bearer, and ourselves as the bearers of each other's burdens.

The bread was laid on the fat and on the shoulder. And so the meat offering in which we participate, the fat which is always God's portion, and the place of strength on which they were borne, were all put upon Aaron's hands, and upon his sons' hands, and waved for a wave offering before the Lord.

This is the first, and, as it were, initiatory priestly act. But as yet the priests are not left entirely to themselves; for though *consecrated*, they are not yet *sanctified*. The wave offering is, however, the preparation for their anointing; the elements, so to speak, of their consecration were presented on their own hands before the Lord, and when the fire of the altar of burnt offering had marked God's approval of what was there, then the consecration was complete, and the anointing with oil followed.

Aaron and his sons are now standing before the Lord clothed in their priestly garments; the sin offering and the burnt offering have been offered, as also the ram of consecration; the blood of the consecration has been put upon the priests; the memorial for burnt offering of the ram, and the unleavened bread of the meat offering, have been lifted up in their hands and waved before the Lord; and the answer of God from the fire of burnt offering is, that it is a "sweet savour, an offering by fire unto the Lord."

But yet, before the anointing, Moses takes the breast

and waves it before the Lord *as his own part*. And this tells us of the love of Him Who bears the names upon His heart, as the origin of all blessing. And this is His part; He "loved us and gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." But, as we see in the directions for this consecration (Exod. xxix), the wave breast, as well as the wave shoulder, was to be set apart from the offerings as the portion of Aaron and his sons, who were to partake of it. And here our own calling is shown forth; for it is on the ground of Christ's first love to us that we are called upon to love Him and one another, and to bear one another's burdens as He has borne them all.

VER. 30. Then the anointing takes place, and the oil and the blood are sprinkled upon Aaron and his sons, and upon their garments, thereby, as it is said, sanctifying both their persons and their apparel. And this completes the ceremonies.

The blood marks the cleansing and consecration both of their persons and their garments, the holy spiritual character of themselves and their ministry. (The tabernacle and vessels had been previously anointed.)

The oil is the spiritual power for communion and service in spiritual things; not the intrinsic worthiness of Christ, which was shown before, but His perfect identification with us, seeing that He, too, was "taken from among men." The garments for glory and beauty were upon Aaron and his sons alike, though his were superior, and his investiture had taken place long before theirs.

VER. 31. When Aaron and his sons had been thus endowed with the power of service, Moses gave them further directions. They were commanded to boil the flesh of the ram of consecration at the door of the tabernacle of

the congregation, and there to eat it with the unleavened bread. This was practically identifying themselves with what they had been made, realising what had been done for them and to them, feeding upon it. This was to be done daily ; the bread and flesh left were to be burnt, not to remain until the morning. And for seven days the offerings were to be repeated, during which time the priests were not to go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Day and night were they to keep the charge of the Lord until the seven days were ended. So is our place of service, and our service itself, as yet a hidden thing ; on the eighth day, at the first resurrection, it will be manifested. The seven days of sojourning on earth are days of consecration, and must be exactly observed, that "ye die not."

The conclusion is that Aaron and his sons *did* all things which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.

They were now perfectly constituted priests, ready to execute their office on the behalf of others in things pertaining to God, and to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ENTRANCE OF THE PRIESTS INTO THEIR OFFICE.

VER. 1. THE ceremonies of the previous chapter were the business of seven days ; in this we have the circumstances and work of the eighth day. This is not the subject of a separate ordinance newly given ; but it is merely said, "It came to pass, on the eighth day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel."

The persons summoned are the High Priest, the priests his sons, and the elders, the representatives of the people on whose behalf the priesthood was instituted.

The first direction is to Aaron, to take for himself a sin offering and a burnt offering. This was atonement and acceptance in the *exercise* of his priestly functions. Though above the people in the privilege of his office, he was not so in his need of cleansing and acceptance, but was in this point on the same level as others. For he was taken from among men, and had need to offer for himself as well as for the people.

Aaron is commanded to offer the sacrifices for himself alone : for the work of atonement and perfect obedience is exclusively Christ's. Our part is communion with Him in His work. Aaron's sons merely present to him the blood and the pieces of the burnt offering.

Then Moses directs Aaron to speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them bring a sin offering and a burnt offering, together with a peace offering and a meat offer-

ing. The reason given for this is the awful announcement,—“To-day the Lord will appear unto you.”

These were the circumstances:—The offerings had been appointed, the priests consecrated to their office, and now the whole congregation, with the priests and the offerings, were before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation where the Lord had appointed to meet them.

The order of the offerings was as follows:—First, Aaron slew the calf for the sin offering, which was for himself.

Then he offered the burnt offering (a ram) for himself.

Afterwards came the offerings for the people, viz. :—

The goat for a sin offering.

The meat offering, of which a handful was burnt “beside the burnt sacrifice of the morning.”

The bullock and the ram for peace offerings.

This is the first complete act of priestly service: the offerings which had been offered at the consecration were offered by Moses.

Their first offerings, which the priests offer for themselves, mark them as partaking of infirmity and sin: and therefore the question of their own cleansing and acceptance is first settled, before the Lord and before the whole congregation. Then they are ready to minister for others. And this they do, intimating, by the usual order of the sacrifices, atonement, acceptance, communion, and, as the result of all, peace.

Lastly, the breasts and the right shoulder were waved for a wave offering, and then taken as the priests' portion.

Thus we have the full and complete order of these offerings, in the circumstances stated; viz., while the priests and the whole congregation were standing before the door of the tabernacle waiting for the appearance of the glory of the Lord.

Aaron then lifted up his hand towards the people and blessed them, and so came down after finishing this complete course of offering.

The action of priestly blessing is also recorded of the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke xxiv. 50. And the form and character of it are given in Numb. vi. 22-27.

Moses and Aaron now go into the tabernacle together, and disappear from view. Then they come out and bless the people; and immediately the glory of the Lord appears unto *all* the people; and a fire comes out from before the Lord, and consumes upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat; and all the people saw it, and shouted, and fell upon their faces.

The royal Priest, the Melchisedek, now comes forth to bless. For Moses and Aaron, walking and blessing together, represent the one great King and Priest at His second appearing. The Lord Jesus was always the royal Priest; but for a while He laid aside His royalty, and took the place of Aaron alone.

The blessing of Moses and Aaron would be that of Gen. xiv., Deut. xxxiii., &c.

With this royal blessing there is God's manifestation of His acceptance and approval, as shown in the fire taking up to Him the smoke of the burnt offering and the fat.

Our actual present position is represented by the absence of Aaron and Moses in the tabernacle of the congregation. We are still in faith realizing the seven days of consecration, still standing before the door of the tabernacle, having as yet received only the Aaronic blessing.

But further, we are able to go *by faith* within the veil, and there to look upon the glory that is to be revealed,

and learn the character of the heavenly and earthly blessings which shall be manifested when our Melchizedek, the Priest of the most High God, comes forth with bread and wine to bless.

In this chapter the directions are given to Aaron, and he does all that is required. His sons only present to him the blood, and, though thus far joined with him in office, are rather identified with the whole congregation in their need and general circumstances. This shows us how, though priests, we are ministering one to another in equal need of the fulness of grace that is in our great High Priest, of Whom alone is the whole work and the sufficiency. But it is our duty to present to Him the blood, without which there can be neither atonement nor acceptance, that He may sprinkle and apply it.

Whilst keeping the charge of the Lord in maintaining inviolate our seven days of holy consecration, we are at the same time in the eighth day's service, in that we are abiding in the midst of the congregation at the door of the tabernacle, presenting the blood, receiving the blessing, and waiting for our great Priest to come forth in the full manifestation of His glory, and in the fulness of His power to bless.

In such circumstances we must specially keep in mind what is presented to us in this chapter. We must remember the parts of the offering which are put aside for our use, after they have been waved as a wave offering before the Lord: we must feel that sympathy one for another which is felt for all by our great High Priest, Who bears their names upon His heart, and is afflicted in all their afflictions. And just as He carries their names also upon His shoulder, so must we bear one another's burdens.

The time during which Moses and Aaron remained within the tabernacle is not mentioned. It was probably but a *little while*: they "went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out." (Compare 2 Chron. vii. 1-4.) "Again a little while, and ye shall see Me."

CHAPTER X.

THE INSTANT FAILURE OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

UP to the close of the last chapter we have a delineation of the way of access to God through the offerings and the priesthood. And on their first day of service the priests had done everything according to the commandment of God ; so that His acceptance and approval were marked by the fire from before Him consuming the burnt offering and the fat, and by the appearing of the glory of the Lord.

So far, then, all was according to commandment, and the result was blessing and glory ; for we have had exhibited to us the perfect work of the Lord Jesus Christ in all the various aspects of His perfect offering, He himself being the great Priest to offer the offering which Himself had provided. In this there could be no failure.

And we have the final result of it set before us, as well as its present effect. For we hear, not only of the Aaronic blessing of life and peace, but also of the Melchizedek blessing of Moses and Aaron ; of the appearing of the glory of the Lord ; and of the giving forth from Him of that holy fire which was not to be extinguished, but which should thenceforth and for ever mark God's acceptance and delight in His own perfect work.

In this chapter we have that which always follows the manifestation of God, and the perfection of blessing

in Himself—the failure, through self-will and disobedience, of whatever is entrusted to man. And man has failed just as much in disregarding the commandments of God's grace, as in rejecting those of His justice.

When God commanded Adam what he should not do, he failed and did it.

When God left man without commandment, he failed again, and progressed each day in wickedness, until "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." And so "death reigned from Adam to Moses," and the severest judgments, as in the case of the flood, proved unable to check human corruption.

Then God gave man commandment both as to what he should do, and as to what he should not do; but still he failed, and broke the first and great particular, even before it was delivered to him in writing.

From the day of his fall the hardness of the heart of man, and his hopeless condition, have been manifestly proved. In all the advances of grace by which God has invited the human family to trust in Himself, no ground has been gained in shaking their obstinate self-confidence, and turning them from the impious aspiration which the tempter first set before them, "Ye shall be as gods."

But the signal failure of man in all things is most strongly shown by the full exhibition of the grace of God. For although, man having been proved incapable, God has Himself at a wondrous self-sacrifice found a means of supplying all his need, so that the command is but, Believe and thou shalt be saved—yet even now the vast majority of the world refuses obedience. Thus the full evil of human nature comes out; God is disbelieved. Man fears God, but believes Him not.

For the priestly failure, which we are now to consider, there was no excuse. God had given commandment in regard to all that needed to be done, specifying every particular, entering into the most minute details. Yet two of the priests despised His ordinances, and offered that which is an abomination to Him, will-worship.

VER. 1. The first thing which is recorded of their doing is that which the Lord had "commanded them not." He had fully and minutely marked every step of the way of access to Himself; they immediately endeavoured to approach Him in their own way. The warning of Sinai had not produced any results. They had forgotten their fearful experience of the presence of God on the mount that burned with fire, and was covered with blackness and darkness and tempest.

The holy fire, which had come out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering on the altar, was alone to be used in the service of the sanctuary. But they took strange fire, and the immediate consequence was that a wrathful flame came out from before the Lord and devoured them. For, as the Lord afterwards declared, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified."

Our only way of access to God is in and by Christ, and this has been most fully and particularly declared to us. In whatever point we take away from this, or add thereto, we are forthwith exposed to the destruction of the fire from before the Lord. "Our God is a consuming fire."

It is a striking characteristic of false religion to do something in mere self-will which God has not commanded to be done, and which is, therefore, contrary to His command; to intrude that which is of the flesh, of nature,

into the presence of God. But there it must meet with destruction.

The sin of Nadab and Abihu was by no means a mere shortcoming and failure through weakness or ignorance. It was a denial, in self-will and self-sufficiency, of the sufficiency of Christ as the only way by which we can approach God and live.

They offered strange fire. This was not the holiness which was from God going up with the incense to Him again, but something which they themselves had provided, "strange fire." And in the very act of offering it they were destroyed. They were standing before the Lord in their capacity of priests, and before the Lord they perished. And the example was necessary; for the ordinances of God would have seemed but a light matter if they could be disregarded with impunity immediately after their institution. Access to God would have appeared a trivial thing, and the mode of obtaining it a matter of indifference.

When the holy fire came down upon the burnt offering, it rested upon it and took it up to God. It destroyed no one, but was productive of joy and reverent adoration in the people. "They shouted, and fell on their faces."

And with *this same fire*, the priests should have approached with their incense before the Lord, and then it would have been their security. (See xvi. 12.)

They died before the Lord; and when Moses had declared the cause of their death, we are told that "*Aaron held his peace.*"

We can only receive the grace of God through Christ Jesus. But if we reject Him, and determine to brave the presence of God in any other way, Christ himself must look upon our destruction in silence. He has nothing to

plead but Himself, and the sufficiency of His own work ; if that be rejected, He has nothing more to say. We may retain the name and the position of Christians ; but only to meet with the more fearful and immediate destruction (Matt. xxiv. 51). There is no remedy ; there must be death before the Lord.

VER. 4. But this circumstance of evil, awful as it was, could not be allowed to interfere with the regular course of the priests' duties and ministrations. No evil may intercept the flow of God's grace. Therefore relatives were called in to take away the dead bodies, and carry them without the camp. For the camp and sanctuary of the living God are no place for the dead, but for the living. "Let the dead bury their dead." And so the slain of the Lord were borne away by those who had some natural relationship to them, but were not themselves priests. They were carried out in their coats, which had been made for glory and beauty, but must now be destroyed with themselves in corruption.

Moses, in directing Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, to take the bodies away, says, "Come near and carry *your brethren* from before the sanctuary out of the camp." By the word "brethren," he seems to remind them that they are interested in the evil before their eyes. So, also, in ver. 6, when Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar, are forbidden to mourn, he says, "Let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord hath kindled." This shows the wide-spread character of the injury sustained by failure in the ministry of the priesthood. And it should be a cause of grief to all believers, that any, while naming the name of Christ, should be drawing down judgment by a profession without reality.

But the priests, now specially mentioned by name, were not to take part in the mourning. It was far more important for them to continue the needed duties of their office, than to bemoan this instance of its failure. They, therefore, must attend to their ministry, lest they should die, and wrath come upon all the people. They were the ministers of life, it was not theirs to bewail death, the cause of which, that is sin, they with their offerings were specially appointed to put away. Their garments for glory and beauty were not to be taken off, nor rent as a sign of mourning. For this would be thrusting fallen nature into the presence of God; therefore they are forbidden to do it with the solemn warning, "Lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people." Their very position as priests did indeed require that they should sympathise with the infirmities of others (Heb. v. 2); but the exercise of their office must be in the constantly sustained remembrance that, being themselves delivered from sin and death, they were set as ministers of the all-sufficient and only remedy for others. They were associated with Him Who "has brought life and immortality to light." If any man died, it was in consequence of rejecting or denying the sufficiency of the remedy which God had provided.

Moreover there was another reason why they should not mourn. For since they had the anointing oil of the Lord upon them, they could not go out from the door of the Tabernacle. Their service was for men in things pertaining to God, and they could perform it only in the sanctuary. For this purpose the holy anointing was upon them, and they could not be permitted to desecrate it by mingling in things other than those to which they were called, and for which they were anointed. Neglect

of the duties appointed by God would soon bring down upon them a destruction similar to that which they had just witnessed, and would cause an outpouring of wrath upon the people.

How strikingly does this history set before us the need of implicit subjection to the word of God in all things ; that we should neither disregard what He has commanded, nor seek to know or to do anything which He has not commanded.

God deals not with nature or with natural things ; for the place of blessing is not earth, but heaven. If we fall short of resurrection life in Christ, we are shut out from God altogether. Failure in this point prevents our own growth in grace and understanding, and altogether takes away our power of communicating blessing to others.

It is only in resurrection life that we are blessed and able to serve ; and it is only of heavenly and resurrection blessings that we are appointed ministers to others.

Failing to realise this truth, we descend to the fellowship of death, and the savour of death must be in all our ministry.

In disregarding it we disregard the work of Christ, and the sanctity of those who are admitted to the presence of God. And to all who so act, whatever may be their standing or profession before men, the manifestation of God in the brightness of His own splendour will bring everlasting and irremediable destruction.

VER. 7. At the close of the charge to the surviving priests it is said, "They did *according to the word of Moses*," instead of "as the Lord commanded."

This seems to imply an understanding of that which had been previously commanded, and had been disregarded by those who had met with destruction. The

priests are reminded of what they ought to do by one who both remembers and understands the commandments of the Lord, to which the example of evil before their eyes would give additional force.

VER. 8. The Lord now speaks directly to Aaron, who being a fully constituted priest, and anointed with the holy oil, has both the right and the power to approach God. Therefore he is henceforth addressed upon those points which relate especially to worship and access to the Lord. But before the Lord could speak to him, the evil of his family must be brought to light and punished as a warning. This had been done, and death had been removed from before the sanctuary out of the camp. Therefore the Lord now communicates with Aaron on the subject of access to Himself.

The commandment was that neither he nor his sons should drink wine or strong drink when they came into the tabernacle, lest they should die. And this was to be a statute for ever.

Wine is that which "cheers the heart of man," excites and lifts him up. But this may not be done in the sanctuary of God. Nature must there be humbled and crucified; everything that tends to exalt the flesh denied. We see the evil results of disobedience to this command in Isa. xxviii.

The reason for the injunction is, "that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken to them by the hand of Moses."

The discernment between holy and unholy does not belong at all to nature, the very evil of which is that it has no such discernment; so that the more we are acting

under its guidance, the more we shall err in this matter. That which is unclean in itself will not be able to distinguish clean from unclean. This understanding can only be given by the Holy Ghost ; and wherever He is acting in power, there the flesh must be humbled, not exalted. For the spirit and the flesh are "contrary the one to the other."

But the priests must also teach the children of Israel. This was an important part of their duty, the prophetic part ; and it could not be performed if the flesh were in any wise exalted or puffed up. All our power for such service is from God.

And herein every formal and false religion is rebuked. All external pomp, or magnificence of buildings, can but cause an excitement of natural feeling. And only the same effect is produced by mere human eloquence in the setting forth of the truth of God. Much need have we then to take to heart the warning, "lest ye die." For there is extreme danger in the use of anything which has a tendency to attract and excite merely natural feelings, lest men should rest in these, and have no discernment of saving truth.

In the case of teaching the people the danger is great, lest the mere gratification of the intellect or taste should be mistaken for the Holy Ghost and the power of God ; lest Christ should not be really discerned at all through the luminous mist of human eloquence.

The clean and the holy are Christ ; the statutes of the Lord are Christ. All else is but unholy, unclean, and false.

The apostle Paul's understanding and care in this matter are powerfully set forth in the first and second chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

Those statutes were to be taught which the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses. Not some new thing which the priests had to discover by their own ingenuity; but that which had been commanded from the first.

And they were to teach *all* the statutes, just as we must preach a whole Christ, not using His name merely, but setting forth all His fulness and sufficiency.

VER. 12. Moses now speaks respecting the further observation of an ordinance which had been commanded, and speaks to Aaron and his sons *by name*. The commandment was at first given to the priests generally, but there had been failure. And from the special mention of names just afterwards we may learn two lessons. First, that though a commandment be neglected by the Church, individual members, if they be faithful, must still consider it in force as regards themselves. And secondly, that, even in the midst of failure, "the Lord knoweth them that are His." "Let," therefore, "*every one* that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Whosoever takes upon himself the office of priesthood, let him individually attend to the directions which God has given for its exercise.

Here the priests are commanded to carry out the laws respecting their own portion of the offerings. For after the death of Nadab and Abihu the survivors probably thought that they must no longer touch the holy things of the Lord. But they were still to take their portion of the meat offering as before, still to enjoy communion by feeding on that of which a memorial had been burnt before the Lord. Only, warned by the fate of their brethren, let them be careful to eat it in accordance with the directions given—in unleavened purity, beside the altar, in the holy place.

The wave breast and the heave shoulder are then particularly mentioned—the partaking of which, as we have before seen, signifies our share in the sympathy of our great High Priest for all, and in His labour in bearing the burdens of others.

These are to be eaten in a clean place, and are the portion also of the sons and daughters of the priests, “which is given out of the sacrifices of peace offerings.”

For all are interested alike in that peace which is the result of the work of Christ, and in our ministration of it one to another. But its communion is only consistent with purity ; it must be eaten in a clean place, to find which we must leave the world. For if worldly interests are occupying our mind, and we are regarding one another only as in the flesh, we are in an unclean place, and may not touch the portion of the Lord’s peace offering.

The heave shoulder and the wave-breast, together with the fat of the offerings, were to be brought and waved for a wave offering before the Lord. Thus He would see the excellence, which was all His own, with the sympathy and co-operation which are ours. And then the declaration is repeated, “It shall be *thine*, and *thy sons with thee*, by a statute for ever, as the Lord hath commanded.”

The frequent repetition of the words “as the Lord hath commanded,” presses strongly upon us the necessity of rejecting all our own imaginations, feelings, and supposed judgment, in regard to what is right. What the Lord has commanded we have to observe, neither less nor more.

VER. 16. This verse mentions the anger of Moses on account of the neglect of an ordinance by Eleazar and Ithamar. Besides the portion of the meat offering and peace offering, the whole of the flesh of the sin offering

was to be eaten, provided the blood had not been taken into the holy place.

In the sin offering at the consecration of the priests (chap. viii.), this law did not come into force, though the blood was not carried into the tabernacle. For it should have been taken thither, since the offering was for a priest (iv. 5-7), and probably was not in this case simply because the priest was not yet anointed. But when after their consecration, the priests for the first time offered a goat as a sin-offering for the people, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar, they ought also to have eaten the flesh. And by the neglect of this ordinance they failed at the very outset to show in type that, like Him Who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, they entered into the evil and sorrow of the sins of others. Moses then, after he had given directions for the eating of the other offerings, those of acceptance and peace, "sought diligently the goat of the sin offering," in order that the priests might partake of it also: but it had been burnt. On this account he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron, which were left alive.

The words, "which were left alive," convey an *intimation of danger* in their reference to the judgment that had just been inflicted for disregard of a commandment. That judgment should have operated as a caution against the neglect of any ordinance.

Moses then adds the reason why the priests should partake of the flesh of the sin offering:—"to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord."

It is only by feeling the sin of others as our own burden, that we can be qualified to act as priests, and

to make atonement before the Lord, bearing the iniquity.

The blood was not brought into the tabernacle, because, since the atonement was not for the priest's own sin, it did not need to be sprinkled in the sanctuary, his place of service.

The complaint of neglect is not made against Aaron, but against his sons, and marks an instance of *our* failure.

But the grace of the Lord is remarkably manifested. In the first place, Moses in referring to the failure does not say, "as the Lord commanded," but "as I commanded." And again, Aaron pleads for the defaulters, taking the blame upon himself; and Moses is content.

Aaron says, "*They* have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the Lord; and such things have befallen *me*; and if I had eaten the sin offering *to-day*, should it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?"

The duty of observing this part of the priestly service remains the same, but the failure is forgiven. For it is not a matter of wilfully putting something in the place of Christ, as the strange fire, but a neglect of the right use of an offering which *has* been rightly offered.

Aaron's words, "such things have befallen me," and his question, "should it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?" may probably imply some evil state of things in the Church, which would render the performance of the duty difficult. Such would be an influx of nominal or corrupt Christianity. And in this case any sympathy with the corrupters could not be accepted, in the sight of the Lord, as a bearing their iniquity to make atonement.

But whatever may be the special character of the failure, the High Priest takes the blame to Himself. And there is in this no approval of *our* neglect.

For Christ is *the* One Who partakes of the sin-offering, and bears the blame of those who do not.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CLEAN AND THE UNCLEAN.

VER. 1. "The Lord spake unto Moses and to Aaron." Aaron is now united with Moses in receiving from the Lord directions for the exercise of that holy discernment to which he had been called, the distinguishing "between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean." The instances in this book in which Moses and Aaron are thus jointly addressed, are all of the same kind. They occur in chap. xiii., which treats of the judgment of the priest concerning the plague of leprosy in man; in xiv. 33, where the following directions have respect to leprosy in a house; and in chap. xv., the subject of which is the uncleanness of an issue in the flesh. The law for the purification of a recovered leper (xiv. 1-32) is given to Moses alone, as are all the subsequent directions in this book.

Thus the part of Aaron in these matters seems to be the exercise of discerning judgment in the use and application of those things which are the subject of the commandments given to Moses.

Aaron had been instructed as to the portion of food for himself and his family out of the holy and most holy things, and knew that they must be eaten in the holy place, or, at least, in a clean place.

He had also been fully cautioned against the drinking of wine or strong drink, as that which would prevent his

exercising a right judgment in discerning between holy and unholy, clean and unclean. He is now called to give directions to the children of Israel as to the animals of which they were permitted to eat. And the permission is not a general one with some exceptions, but, out of the whole animal kingdom, only the creatures mentioned might be used as food. "These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth."

Living creatures were not given to Adam for food at all ; to him it was said, " Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat " (Gen. ii. 16).

To Noah the animals were given for food ; and to him the permission was, "*Every* moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things " (Gen. ix. 3).

To the Church it is said, " Every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving : for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer " (*ἡρώεσις*, 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5). And making a distinction of meats is rebuked as an evil.

But the ordinance in Leviticus occupies a middle place between the two.

In the case of Noah, God intended a fresh trial of man, and, therefore, left him entirely free to choose for himself, except that he was commanded to abstain from the blood which is the life.

During the time that God winked at the ignorance of man as to his true condition, and suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, there was no intimation given of uncleanness. But when He called out from among the nations a people to be holy to Himself, among whom He would manifest His own presence, and walk in the midst of them ; then there was a necessity for acquainting them

with that which defiled, in order that they might avoid it. And this is the reason here given for the ordinance of distinguishing between clean and unclean :—"Ye shall be holy ; for I am holy."

The things here appointed to be eaten were not in themselves intrinsically more clean than the others ; but they were so to the Israelites because of the permission and commandment of God. It was not a question of the discernment of nature as to clean and unclean ; but a revelation of the mind and command of God. He was showing, in this as at all times, that in the midst of sin and evil, He Himself is the only source of good and blessing. It was in the offerings through the medium of the priesthood that Israel knew, individually and collectively, the blessings of sin put away and acceptance with God, and the privilege of access in worship to Him.

But we now come to the question of the *practical sanctification*, in their daily walk, of the holy people of the Lord. And in regard to this, they were instructed by the Word of God, Who spoke to them through the priest, and made known His mind concerning the distinction between clean and unclean.

Hence we may understand the important character of the prophetic part of the priest's office, and the need of the warning previously given (x. 9-11), that there should be nothing in them to hinder the holy discernment of the mind of God, which they were to communicate for the guidance of the people.

In its application to the Church this chapter teaches those who are assured of their forgiveness and full acceptance that, in the power of Christ's resurrection, they should walk in holy separation from evil, and that they, too, have from God the power of discerning and

understanding in what evil consists. For it is "*all that is of the world,*" and its injury is that it causes us to mind earthly things. Thus, while for our use everything is sanctified, the very fact of our being in any way subject to ordinances—"touch not; taste not; handle not"—is a proof that we do not see our entire and total separation from all evil in the resurrection of Christ.

We may, then, learn much from the law given to Israel.

For the principles upon which God acts, and which He sets before His people, are always identical. The exhibition of them may, indeed, vary with circumstances, yet they are in themselves ever the same, and that not only in their breadth and general character, but even in their minutest details.

Thus, in the present chapter, the particular characteristics mentioned of the animals, by which they were to be distinguished as clean or unclean, convey to us those moral principles of action by which we are to be guided, if we be children of God.

VER. 3. "*Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.*"

These are the characteristics of those clean animals that are *upon the earth*.

The great moral duty now taught seems to be separation from the world, which is also a most prominent commandment in the New Testament.

The completely divided hoof is that which enables the animal, when treading in soft and miry places, to withdraw the sunken foot with more facility. In Psalm lxi., where also the figure of sinking in deep mire is used (ver. 2), the Psalmist, in speaking of his thanksgiving, says :

"This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs;" or rather, "showing horns and dividing the hoof." The first of these qualities marks the creature as being at least three years old, and, therefore, of the proper age for sacrifice; the second proves it to belong to the class of clean fourfooted animals according to this ordinance.

Hence the divided hoof of the bullock used in the burnt offering makes it a more appropriate type of Him Who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;" Who trod in the miry places of this world without being held by them, and without contracting defilement. He was *in* the world, but was not *of* the world, and it was *in* the world that He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and was made perfect through sufferings. And He says, "*As* Thou hast sent Me into the world, even *so* I have sent them into the world." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." It is only while in the midst of evil that, by separation from it and obedience to God, we can learn what He is.

Thus, by the divided hoof, we are taught to maintain practically the power of detaching ourselves from evil, while we remain in it for our sanctification according to the purpose of God. (See Deut. viii.)

But it was also required that the clean animal should "chew the cud," should belong to the class usually called "ruminating." That is, that it should be one of the creatures which bring up again the slightly chewed food, and quietly masticate and prepare it for digestion. So should we gather wisdom from the pastures of God's word;

and then, by meditating upon it day and night, appropriate it, and become conformed to it.

Man in innocence knew not evil, his very innocence was ignorance of evil; and in gaining the knowledge of good and evil, he became contaminated by the latter. God alone is good in the knowledge of evil, *that is, holy*. And this is the knowledge to which He is bringing His children who know the evil, even to know His power in delivering them from it, that they should be "holy as He is holy." Such is the teaching of 2 Pet. i. 4, where the result of God's dealing with us is stated to be that we become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." And immediately the injunction follows, "Beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue," &c. This is the meditation referred to as "chewing the cud." And it is still more distinctly set forth in Phil. iv. 8.

The first Psalm, in presenting to us the blessed man, marks him as uniting the two qualities of which we have been speaking. The first verse illustrates the characteristic of the divided hoof, the second that of chewing the cud. The result is that the man is blessed, while "the ungodly are not so."

VER. 4. "Nevertheless, these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof; as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you," &c.

The end will not be attained by the one quality without the other. There may be in some sense a feeding on the truth, but if there be not also the power of separation from evil, there will be no practical sanctification, no real growth in grace and the knowledge of the Lord, no becoming partakers of the divine nature.

A solid and compact hoof would be much more suitable than a divided one for activity upon the hard and clean ground, but not for going through filth and miry pollution. And such are the places through which true service calls us, and where fruit is gathered, and holiness is learned. But here as ever the Lord Jesus Himself is the one thing that occupies the mind of the Spirit. "He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners," is what we are told of the place of His daily walk in this world. "He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself," and "learned obedience by the things which He suffered." And though his feet sank in deep mire," He went onward, unstayed in His path of obedience.

There may be much of busy activity in the world, in the name of the Lord, without any separation from the evil: there may be hard work, while those who are doing it forget that to which they are specially called, to be separate.

This fact may be exhibited in the instance of the "camel." Perhaps, too, in the "coney and hare," with a further reference to their peculiar characteristics of timidity and fearfulness, and of hiding themselves in the earth (Prov. xxx. 26).

"The swine" is also an exception, because, although he parts the hoof, he does not chew the cud.

This is a separateness from the world without any regard for the truth. Such a course can avail nothing; for mere natural feeling leads many to do this in some way or other. But true principles of holiness or obedience are the only ground on which separation is enjoined, or can be maintained. Sometimes, in the case of those who are represented by the swine, there may be

at first a measure of true principle at work ; but this, if not maintained, only makes the matter worse. So Peter teaches in his second epistle (ii. 20-22), where he speaks of those who return to the evil and pollutions of the world, like "the sow *that was washed* to her wallowing in the mire." And "the latter end" of such is said to be "worse than the beginning."

The necessity for the total avoidance of such evil as is referred to in these instances, is shown by the injunction to abstain, not only from eating the flesh of the unclean animals, but even from touching their carcases. "Every one that toucheth them shall be unclean" (ver. 26).

These, then, are the beasts that are "upon the earth." The general characteristic evils which they represent are,—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;" "the corruption that is in the world through lust;" a cowardly fleeing from duty; anxiety to provide a settled dwelling upon earth; the minding earthly things; the making a god of the belly; and the glorying in that which is shame.

To such ends as these are the energies of men largely directed, while all their knowledge, acquired in evil, of the arts and sciences is made to minister to their desires and necessities, that they may better their condition upon the earth, that is, in a state of separation from God.

In pursuit of such ends the Jew and the Greek alike manifest a unity of purpose, and an equal ardour of devotion; while with regard to the supreme good, the remedy which God presents for all evil, it is but folly to both of them. The one requires "a sign," and the other seeks after "wisdom."

It is the union of such principles which constitutes

Babylon, the great centre of earthly greatness and grandeur. The power that is put forth in combined counsel and effort against the Lord and His Christ is that of the "Kings of the earth;" it is "the Kings of the earth" who receive power with "*the beast*," and who give their kingdom to the beast. "All the world" wonders after the beast; and it is they "that dwell upon the earth" who worship him.

The beast, as described in the Apocalypse, seems to comprehend in itself the supremacy of all the evil against which we are here cautioned, whether to be found in the heaven, the earth, or the waters.

VER. 9. "*These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters.*"

This, as in the previous instance, implies a prohibition as to *all*; the exceptions being only "whatsoever hath fins and scales."

The waters here comprehend "the waters, the seas, and the rivers."

The symbol of waters is explained (Rev. xvii. 15) to mean, "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues."

Taking the figure generally, the sea is the congregated mass, and the rivers those which contribute to swell and to maintain it.

When the whore (Rev. xvii. 1) is said to sit upon the waters, she is evidently in a place of power over masses of peoples by the influence of principles of some kind.

In Ezek. xxix. and xxxii., the figure of waters, rivers, and seas, with their inhabitants from the "great dragon" to "all the fish," is used to describe Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and his multitude. He is rebuked for saying, "the river is mine and I have made it;" and because of his arrogance the Lord declares, "I am against thee and against

thy rivers " (Ezek. xxix. 9, 10). In Jeremiah xli., the stretching forth of Egypt in power is described by the same figure, "Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city, and the inhabitants thereof."

In Isaiah xix., the same figure is again used with respect to Egypt, and there is a description of judgment. "The waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up." This judgment includes, too, "the brooks of defence," "the reeds and flags," "and everything sown by the brooks;" "the fishers," "all they that cast angle," "and they that spread nets." (See also Isa. viii. 7; xi. 15; xxvii. 1, 12, and many other passages.)

But in Ezekiel xlvii., we have a river proceeding from the sanctuary of God, "which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed." And the result is, that every moving thing *shall live*, and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, the fishers shall spread forth their nets, and "the fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many." The waters shall be healing, and on the banks of the river shall grow all trees for meat. (See also Rev. xxii. 1, 2.)

In Deut. viii. 7, the good land is spoken of as "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills."

In the description of the new heavens and earth in Rev. xxi., it is said, "There was no more sea."

In Ps. cv. 41, we read, "He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out, they ran in the dry places like a river." And in 1 Cor. x. 4, "That rock was Christ."

In general, the dry and parched places of the earth signify the lack of the blessings which man needs, and the river of waters which proceeds from God indicates the supply of those blessings. But man has rivers of water of his own, and these rivers have swelled into seas. God's river runs smoothly in its channel, and though increasing into a broad stream, it produces no sea with tumultuous and boisterous waves, but, on the contrary, it heals the waters of the sea (Ezek. xlvii.). In Rev. xxii., it irrigates the trees which are for the healing of *the nations*. In the rivers of man, though they may have swelled into a sea, there is death. The river of God is a river of life, it heals the sea. The tide of blessing which is to flow from Him and His sanctuary will bring life to the nations.

In Matt. xiii. 47, the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a net cast into *the sea*, and gathering of every kind, both good and bad.

Passing through divided waters dryshod is a type of death overcome in resurrection, as in the crossing of Jordan by the Israelites, and by Elijah and Elisha, and the passage of the Red Sea by the Israelites.

In Paradise there was a river that watered the garden. But, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, there came a flood of waters in destroying judgment. The streams of this flood came both from above and beneath; "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."

In Rev. viii. 8-11, there is a judgment upon the sea, and upon the rivers and fountains of waters. And in chap. ix. 13-19, the loosing of the angels bound in the great river Euphrates produces the army of 200,000,000

horsemen. In chap. xvi. the pouring out of the vial upon that river dries up its waters.

The rivers in Scripture are spoken of as being polluted, corrupted, and troubled. The river of the water of life is pure, and clear as crystal. It seems, then, that the seas and the rivers of waters, with their inhabitants, present to us the multitudinous congregated masses of mankind.

The true people of God are mixed up with the masses of death and evil, and the object of the net in Matt. xiii. 47 was to take out the good. But it has taken both good and bad; for there is a false as well as a true profession; and, therefore, a yet further separation is necessary.

The waters of Noah's flood seem to be typical of evil and death, coming, as they did, from above and beneath, until their overwhelming force had covered and destroyed everything but the ark of safety that floated above. And it is only when these waters have dried up entirely from the earth that the sea gives up its dead, and death and hell are cast into the lake of fire. For when the new heavens and the new earth appear, there is no more sea.

These are the heavens and the earth, of which those in Genesis are typical, with the mark of evil and death—the sea—for ever removed.

In Genesis we hear of the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters. The light shines, and then the waters are divided. Part are taken up above the firmament of heaven, and part remain below constituting the sea, which in the new earth is to be no more. "At Thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away" (Ps. civ. 7; lxv. 7). [But of the upper

waters we read, "Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens" (Ps. cxxviii. 4).]

In "this great and wide sea," there are "innumerable creeping things, both small and great beasts," "the ships," and "that leviathan whom Thou hast made to play therein" (Ps. civ. 25, 26). Thus, under the figure of the sea and its inhabitants, a grand general principle is exhibited, viz., the working of evil in the production of its creatures, and the evil principles acting upon these creatures, and gaining strength by calling out the moral and physical force of that which they have themselves produced. This is the "course of this world," of which the devil, the great leviathan, is the head, and which is pressing forward, with ever-accumulating power and energy, to destroy, through the means of that very latent principle of mightier power by which it shall be ultimately destroyed—fire.

But the inhabitants of the waters are here more immediately in question, and the prohibition of them as food is general, with the exception of those having "fins and scales."

The scales of a fish are for defence, the fins for motion. The latter are not mentioned in Scripture, excepting in this ordinance.

We have here no caution, as previously with regard to the dividing the hoof and chewing the cud, that some fish may have one characteristic without the other; and may therefore conclude that fins and scales are always found together. If this be so, it will follow that whatever the scales represent as fixed for defence, the fins must signify the same in activity.

In the description of leviathan (Job xli.) it is said;—

"his scales (strong pieces of shield, marg.) are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal. One is so near the other that no air can come between them." In Isaiah xxvii. 1, we are told that "the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan."

For God is able to pierce through that defence which the monster in his pride deems impenetrable. And in Eph. vi. 16, we learn of that part of the armour of God which is able to resist those fiery darts which the wicked one thinks irresistible. This is the shield of faith; of faith which overcomes, which takes hold of God as being able, and is thus confident and at rest. And our faith being confidence, will sometimes resemble in its outward aspect the confidence of the children of this world. But the latter is pride, confidence in self; the former is faith, confidence in God; yet both are confidence.

In Job xli. 15, 34, it is said that "his scales are his pride," and that "he is king over all the children of pride." And so in Ezek. xxix. 4, where we have the destruction of the "great dragon, and the fish of his rivers," the prophet declares, "*all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales.*" The judgment comes on account of pride; because he boasted, "My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself." And in ver. 4, we have also an answer to the questions asked in Job xli. 2, "Canst thou put a hook in his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?" For God says, "I will put hooks in thy jaws," &c.

In these passages compared with Eph. vi., the Lord shows us that Himself can overcome the great enemy, and that He alone is able to give power to His people to withstand, and quench the fiery darts which are hurled at them. And what He gives is faith, which enables us to

take the power that is God's and use it both for action and for defence.

Thus, then, it appears that the only characteristics of the wicked in which we may participate are their boldness and confidence.

But in their case the confidence is that of pride and indifference; in ours that of faith. Man may not always be able to distinguish between them: but God knows and marks the distinction, although Satan does sometimes transform himself into an angel of light, and give an ungrounded confidence which may wear a religious aspect. All that has been said of the scales will equally apply to the fins, the *activity* of the same principle; which, on the one hand, carries forward the masses headlong in their own false ways to destruction; and on the other, urges onward the children of the kingdom in the ways of God, to the attainment of everlasting life.

VER. 13. "*And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls.*"

The form of this ordinance differs from the two former. It conveys universal permission to partake of the fowls, except those that are mentioned as an abomination. See in Deut. xiv. 11, 16, "Of all clean birds ye shall eat."

Thus the moral principles unfolded in this case are such as the holy people of God should cultivate and maintain. The exceptions present a caution against the false and evil application of sound principles.

We learn the natural and usual habits of birds in the account of their creation. "Fowl that may fly above the earth, in the open firmament of heaven" (Gen. i. 20).

The application of this is plain. It points to the cherishing of that state of heart which we call heavenly-mindedness (τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖν). The true holiness of the

people of God consists in their separation, in spirit, from earth and earthly things, and their elevation to heaven and heavenly things. And the latter have always been their appointed sphere and portion from the beginning, before the foundation of the world.

The minding of heavenly things is the living in the power of resurrection, in the knowledge of it as our state for blessing and safety. It is the natural habit of the bird to be soaring aloft. It finds enjoyment in so doing. And when disturbed and affrighted on earth, its wings afford it the means of escape. Of this the Psalmist was thinking when he sang:—"Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest." So the complaint uttered in Psalm cii. 6, is like that of one who has some knowledge of the power of resurrection, and is longing for its realisation. "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top." He is, as it were, waiting for the moment of the full power of flight, that he may fly away and be at rest; watching, like they that watch for the morning.

Thus the necessity of the power of resurrection and of the knowledge of, and communion with, heavenly things, seems to be the general truth here set before us.

Our actual observation may furnish instances of birds which, from long habit of keeping to the earth, seem almost to have lost the power of flight. And, since nature quickly adapts itself to circumstances, many of these retain barely sufficient strength of wing to escape mischief, and are evidently strangers to the delight which

other birds manifest in soaring upwards with a song of joy.

In Matt. x. 28, 29, our Lord, when enjoining upon His disciples not to "fear them that kill the body," refers evidently, though obscurely, to resurrection; and immediately afterwards speaks of birds, and says, "One of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father."

In Luke xii. 24, the Lord takes another illustration from the fowls to encourage His disciples to entire confidence in God: "Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have store-house nor barn; and God feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls!"

In Matt. vi. 26, He says, "Behold the fowls of the air," &c. His instruction is concerning the necessary things of food and raiment, and He concludes by bidding His disciples to take no thought, no anxiety, for the morrow in regard to such things; but to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and that then all other things shall be added unto them. And He intimates that all such earthly cares are evil, for He says:—"Sufficient unto the day is *the evil* thereof."

He would have His own entirely at rest as regards all matters of present necessity, in order that they may be free to seek the kingdom of God; and the knowledge, the true knowledge, of that kingdom is only to be found in resurrection life. God provides that which is needed even for those inanimate things which by nature are bound to earth, whose end is to be burned; He provides also for the fowls which have the power to wing their way to a place of safety; and He says, "Are not ye much better than they?"

Thus the Lord constantly uses natural things as a

medium of instruction in the great lesson which He came to teach, that of life and immortality brought to light in resurrection.

But the symbol of the fowls of heaven is also used in reference to angels, both good and bad. (Compare Job xxviii. 21 with Matt. xxiv. 36; and see Dan. ix. 21; Rev. xiv. 6; Matt. xxii. 30; Eph. vi. 12 (marg.); Matt. xiii. 4, 19.)

In Luke xx. 36, the children of God are declared to be so as being the children of the resurrection; and, for the same reason, they are equal to the angels (ἰσάγγελοι).

The holy angels of God are, like the Church, called elect angels. And the special phases of evil against which we are warned in the fallen angels are that they kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation; and that they went after "strange flesh," like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. (Compare Jude 6, 7, with Gen. vi. 2, 4.) Their continuance in such evil seems marked. (See Matt. xiii. 32; Ezek. xvii. 23.) That they for the present retain a place of power, though in darkness, is evident from such passages as Eph. vi. 12; ii. 2, &c. Yet some of them are in a different condition (Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4).

The fearful result of this evil is given as a warning to us who are in like circumstances. It is told that we, whose profession is of a heavenly portion and of separation from earth in resurrection life, may not forsake our first estate, and incur so appalling a judgment (Phil. iii. 18, 19).

The exceptions to the general rule concerning all clean birds are given individually by name; not characteristically, as in the ordinance for the beasts, further than might be understood from a knowledge of the birds ex-

cepted and their habits, which would doubtless illustrate the character of the evil to be avoided.

Our own knowledge and observation may teach us something, if we be aided by the Spirit of God. But we may gain the most certain information from references in Scripture to any of the birds mentioned, and by a right judgment of what the Lord says about them. For there is great difficulty in learning from our own experience, since we are by no means sure that we rightly interpret the names of some of the fowls excepted.

Doubtless each one thus particularised presents some character or aspect of evil at variance with the general character of birds. They seem to be mostly, if not altogether, birds of prey.

"*The eagle.*" This creature is pre-eminent among the birds of prey, and is consequently often used as a figure in Scripture. In Luke xvii. 37, the Lord says, "Whosoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." This, perhaps, refers to Job xxxix. 28—"She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood; and where the slain are, there is she." In Deut. xxviii. 49, the Lord speaks of bringing a heathen nation against His people to destroy them, "from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth." In Ezek. xvii., the King of Babylon is compared to a great eagle."

Here we have a creature feeding upon death and corruption with voracity; the exercise of great intelligence and power directed solely by the desire of sensual gratification. The eagle soars to the greatest height, but always in search of prey, which is either something that

is dead, or some feeble and helpless animal unable to resist.

The towering pride of Edom is rebuked by the Lord under the figure of the eagle (Jer. xlix. 16),—"Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord." See the whole context, and compare Ezek. i. 10 with Dan. vii. 14 and Rev. iv. 7.

In Exod. xix. 4 and Deut. xxxii. 11, there is a power implied which the Lord alone can rightly use, or give when needed.

In Rev. xii. and xiii., we find the power of eagle flight, which *was* characteristic of the beast in Daniel, no longer there. The leopard, the bear, and the lion, still remain; but the eagle's wings are given to the woman.

In Obadiah 4 we have the eagle as the symbol of exalted pride. In Micah i. 16, we have another eagle characteristic—"Make thee bald, and poll thee for thy delicate children; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; for they are gone into captivity from thee."

The eagle characteristics are used by God in judgment, and Satan's power displays them. But we must not partake of them. Nevertheless *God* gives eagle strength to His own when it is needed, and exercises it on their behalf.

"*The vulture*:" Job says (xviii. 7), when speaking of "wisdom and understanding;" "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." And in ver. 20; "Whence, then,

cometh wisdom ? and where is the place of understanding ? seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air."

All true wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, is not of our own attainment, but is the gift of God. And both the communication and the power to receive it are alike from Him. Thus in 1 Cor. ii. 9 :—" Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath *revealed* them unto us by His Spirit : for the Spirit *searcheth* all things, yea, the deep things of God." "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have *received*, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Which is of God."

Thus far, the evil against which we are here cautioned seems to be the pride of self-exaltation, self-confidence through the conscious possession of power, or the use of power in ministering to self-gratification.

The true exaltation of the people of God, in the power of resurrection life, will always be productive of humility (Eph. iv. 1, 2).

"*The raven.*" In Gen. viii., we have a comparison between the raven and the dove. The raven, which Noah first sent out from the ark, "went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from the earth." The dove, finding no rest for the sole of her foot, came back to the ark ; and when again sent forth, returned with an olive leaf in her mouth. The raven's characteristics are self-confidence and self-seeking. Careless of a place of safety she trusted to her own power to continue until the waters were abated. This exhibited contrariety to the Spirit of God, Which descended upon the Lord Jesus "like a dove." In Job xxxviii. 41, and Ps. cxlvii. 9, we

have a general characteristic of ravens, viz. "crying for food." This is their one solicitude, how they may obtain food for themselves; and against such an anxiety we are warned in Matt. vi. 34. When the Lord tells Elijah that He has commanded the ravens to feed him, He is teaching the prophet to trust in Himself, and thus uses the birds whose habits are altogether contrary to the ministry appointed for them; but He says, "*I have commanded.*" So in Luke xii. 24, God feeds the ravens, though to eat is the end of their desire. How much more, then, will He feed those whose desires are to do His will, and to seek His kingdom and righteousness! Anxiety in regard to earthly necessities is, then, another evil against which we are cautioned in this instance.

In Isaiah xxxiv. 11-15, ravens, together with other birds spoken of in these exceptions, are mentioned as dwelling in the midst of devastation and ruin; and in Prov. xxx. 17, as associated with the eagle in doing the work of God's judgment.

In Cant. v. 11, we are told of One Who possesses a quality of this bird; for "His locks are bushy, and black as a raven." But here the beauty is in its place; the blackness covers not all, but is in beautiful harmony with the "white and ruddy," and "the most fine gold." And yet this beauty is appropriated from an unclean bird. So is the one talent taken away from the slothful servant, and given to him that has ten (Luke xix. 24-26).

"*The owl.*" The general characteristic of the owl appears to be doleful mourning (Job xxx. 29; Ps. cii. 6). And this is at variance with that which we have seen to be characteristic of "birds of wing." (See Phil. iii. 1, 3; iv. 1, 4.)

Owls are constantly mentioned in Scripture as finding their habitation in places made desolate by God's judgment, where they utter their dismal screams. This sets forth the kind of sorrowing which comes from the flesh, that which God has set aside as a desolate thing; it is the lamentation of those who will hope for something good where no good is to be found.

In Isaiah xliii. 20, a time of blessing is predicted when the Lord will "make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." In describing it He says, "The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls" (or 'the daughters of the ostrich,' marg.). This is the coming age which the Church in spirit anticipates and realises. And thus, knowing the consolation of Christ, she rejoices in all her affliction, she glories in her tribulation; for her place is to rejoice in the Lord always.

"*The stork.*" Ps. civ. 17, "The fir trees are her house." Jer. viii. 7, "The stork in heaven knoweth her appointed times, . . . but my people know not the judgment of the Lord."

In the Gospel of Matthew the birds of the air are said to make their abode in the branches of the great tree of the kingdom of heaven. This is evil finding a place in the nominal Church, and vainly imagining that it has security there. But "every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

The stork is connected with "wickedness" in Zech. v. 9. The women that bear the ephah to the land of Shinar have "wings like the wings of a stork." They lift up the ephah "between the earth and the heaven." This represents perverted doctrine, and false practice; for the Church is entirely heavenly. This system stands on its own base; while the foundation of the Church is Christ.

But the stork "knoweth her appointed times." And thus the Lord rebukes His people with the words :—"The children of this age are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

A judgment on the fir tree is spoken of afterwards in Zech. xi. 1, 2, and other trees are included with it. Compare Luke xxi. 29.

The doctrine of God is "according to godliness." A profession, an outward connection with a Church, is in itself nothing. That which has a name to live may be dead (Rev. iii. 1).

"*The bat.*" Isa. ii. 20: "In that day shall a man cast his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, *to the moles and to the bats.*"

The bats avoid the light, they come forth in the evening just before the darkness sets in. The idols of gold and silver are the things that fill the desires of such ; and they seem to belong more to earth than heaven ; for when the birds are going to rest, then they come forth. In the true Church the full light shines, and all occasion of self-seeking is put away. "He that hateth his brother walketh in darkness." And "he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth ;" he may even suppose that gain is godliness.

It is the profession of a name to live coupled with worldly aims and conduct which makes it doubtful to which class the individual belongs, and renders him like the bat, a sort of link of connection between birds and creeping things.

The Lord in Matt. vi. warns us against that which leads to this dangerous and mischievous condition. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "Therefore I say unto you,

take no thought for your life," &c. Thus does the great teacher point out the traits by which we may distinguish the bat character in professing Christians.

VER. 20. "*All fowls that creep, going upon all four, shall be an abomination unto you.*"

This ordinance varies from the others, in that it commences with a distinct and universal prohibition. The principles previously set forth in the unclean birds lead to the characteristics of this class: and so the bat comes last, and immediately before the creeping fowls. These have wings; but they have also four legs, and creep upon the earth. The persons represented by them are fully and awfully described in Phil. iii. 18, 19.

We must make no terms with earthly-mindedness in any of its forms; it must be an utter abomination.

Thus the various shades of evil principles are carefully arranged, from the pride of the towering eagle to the indecision of heart manifested in the doubtful bat; and, still further, to the utter denial of all that the profession of Christianity implies, in the deformity and grovelling nature of the winged reptiles. And in this last grade of all we are again reminded of the importance of the power specified in the first of these ordinances, that of detaching the feet from adhesion to the earth.

Even to this class there *are* exceptions: but we must mark that the full and entire prohibition comes first. In the case of the beasts it is different: for those which may be partaken of are first mentioned. So in that of the fowls, the permission is general and the *exceptions* are those which may *not* be eaten.

Here the exceptions are characterised as creatures, "*which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth.*"

This contemplates a low state of the Church ; the knowledge and power of resurrection, which is the wing, are not felt. But there is a quality, more connected indeed with the earth, yet having some power to detach from it. The death of Christ, as well as His resurrection, is separation from the world ; but the latter marks it as already and entirely done, while it is only implied in the former.

Probably the Epistle to the Galatians is written to Christians of this class. Its object is to correct the error of departure from fundamental truth, the truth of a sinner's justification by faith. The great separating truth of resurrection is only glanced at, inasmuch as the Galatians had departed from the more elementary truth on which that, as the result of the *death* of Christ, was built. But there is a general aspect of truth to which they are directed ; "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ : " and this implies all that Christ is. In this case Paul introduces his epistle with the statement that Christ "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world."

The soul may become darkened to the power and light of the great truth of resurrection as an entire separation from earth. But whatever inclines to promote that separation must be cherished and cultivated. And if a Christianity be found with no tendency to rise above the world, we are here taught to regard it as an abomination. But there are a few exceptions specified by name.

"*The locust.*" A general characteristic of the locust may be found in Ps. cix. 23. There one complaining of present trouble and affliction from evil persons, but looking for their judgment and his own deliverance, says, "I

am tossed up and down as the locust." In Prov. xxx. 27, it is said, "The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands." In Nahum iii. 15, we have an allusion to their number:—"Make thyself many as the locusts."

The first quotation marks an unquiet and unsettled state of soul; and this is always the result of low or indefinite views of the completeness and sufficiency of the work of Christ.

In the second, we see that wanting which would produce absolute uniformity of action and obedience, making the locusts as one nation under one king. Yet they go forth united in bands, and have a certain measure of wisdom and understanding in action. In the Corinthian Church, there was much good, there was testimony for Christ: yet there was no such acknowledgment of His headship and authority as to prevent the Church from being split into parties. And the case is similar among Christians of the present day.

In the third instance, we learn that characters such as those represented by the locusts are numerous, and their principles largely recognised.

In the New Testament John the Baptist is spoken of as eating "locusts and wild honey." Perhaps the first kind of food intimates the imperfect knowledge which he had of that life and immortality which Christ was about to bring to light; while the wild honey seems to hint that all hope of nature was not yet gone. The Lord says, that though there was no greater than John among those that were born of women, nevertheless the least in the kingdom of God *was* greater than he, that is, the least of those who are born of the Spirit into resurrection life.

"The grasshopper." This creature is mentioned in the following passages. In Numb. xiii. 33, the Israelites, comparing themselves with the giants that were in the land, say, "We were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." In Isa. xl. 22, men compared with God are as grasshoppers." In Job xxxix. 20, their timidity is marked. "Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?"

Judges vi. 5 alludes to them as numerous. "They came as grasshoppers for multitude." See. vii. 12; Jer. xlvi. 23.

In Nahum iii. 17, locusts and grasshoppers are thus mentioned together:—"Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, but when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they are."

In Eccles. xii. 5, where death and its circumstances are contemplated, it is said, among many other things, that "the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to his long home."

In the first passage we have grasshoppers used to express the feebleness and fear which God rebuked in the Israelites, as arising from their looking to themselves, and not to Him. And this is a failing in that power of resurrection which answers all fearful questionings. The second quotation also alludes to the timidity of grasshoppers; while the third refers to their numbers, as in the case of the locusts.

In the fourth passage, we have the assumption of power by both locusts and grasshoppers, but only "in the cold day;" when the sun arises, they all vanish, and are seen no more.

Their condition is thus contrasted with that of the birds, who after their disappearance are flying joyfully in the midst of heaven. For nothing short of resurrection life will stand in the day of trial.

And this truth is again enforced in the last instance (Eccles. xii. 5). The very feeble and dim apprehension of that which should be a full and glorious assurance, involving consequences which it is insufficient to sustain, becomes in itself a burden, and desire fails. "To him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten."

VER. 23. The injunction which commenced this paragraph is again repeated at its close;—"But all other flying creeping things which have four feet, shall be an abomination unto you."

By such types, then, does the Holy Spirit urge upon us the necessity of growing in power over, and separation from, flesh, nature, and the world; of pressing forward to apprehend that for which we are apprehended, while we count all things but loss and dung, if *by any means* we may attain to the resurrection out of the dead.

Similarly we are commanded, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." And the Lord Jesus prays for us:—"Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me." Nay, He has Himself left us an example that we should walk in His steps; and we are exhorted to let the same mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus. The apostle, too, "the chief of sinners," after he had been translated from death unto life, tells us how he himself acted, and then says, "Be ye followers of me, and

mark them who walk so as ye have us for an ensample ; for our conversation is in heaven."

Again, these ordinances show how fully and accurately God marks out the path in which His children are to walk ; He has left nothing undefined or uncertain, and has endowed us with understanding and power to keep His ways. For He "has not given us a spirit of fear ; but of love, and of power, and of a sound mind." He has left us no excuse for the failure which we are so constantly confessing, and which is in fact nothing but disobedience. For it arises entirely from pride and self-sufficiency, although it often appears in the garb of humility. But true humility is obedience, and that not as having the power in ourselves, but in God Who is able to supply all our needs.

VER. 24. "And for these ye shall be unclean : whosoever toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even. And whosoever beareth ought of the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even."

By "these" we must understand "every beast which divideth the hoof," &c. (ver. 26). It was before distinctly stated that these creatures were unclean and an abomination, but now that their uncleanness would be communicated to any who even touched them. Not only was the eating of the carcase forbidden, but even contact with it was declared to involve the pollution which results in death. So it is said (Rom. vi. 21), "What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed ? for the end of those things is death." And so in James i. 15, "When *lust* hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

1 Thess. v. 22 : "Abstain from all appearance (*lit.*

'form' or 'kind,' *εἶδος*) of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." 2 Cor. vi. 17: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and *touch not the unclean thing.*" See Isa. lii. 11.

1 Cor. xv. 33: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."

Such passages as these convey the moral force of what we are here taught.

There had been a previous warning against eating unclean animals; that would be disobedience; but now they must not even be touched. The same connection may be observed in Eph. v.: "For this ye know that no whoremonger, nor unclean person hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (ver. 5 and 6).

"Be ye not therefore partakers with them" (ver. 7). "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (ver. 11). "See then that ye walk circumspectly" (ver. 15).

The uncleanness so contracted was to continue "*until the evening,*" that is, until the season when man's work and labour ceases (Ps. civ. 23). At that time a daily sacrifice was appointed to be offered. See Heb. iv. "We which have believed do enter into rest" (ver. 3). "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works" (ver. 10).

There is nothing said of any ordinance of purification in the case of eating the forbidden animals; the case itself is not supposed; for it would be a deliberate act of disobedience. But contact with a carcase might be accidental or involuntary, and was liable to occur fre-

quently. Accordingly, for this there is an ordinance of purification. "He shall wash his clothes." In this passage there is no direct reference to the purification of the person; but it is mentioned later (chap. xxii. 6). Here the law regards one who "beareth ought of the carcase of them." In chap. xxii. it deals with "whosoever toucheth any creeping thing," and in this instance the person must wash his flesh. It is also a particular case having reference to the eating of holy things; but in chap. xi. the question is one of general uncleanness.

The sanctification of the people of God extends to body, soul, and spirit. And it is needed; for we cannot pass through the defilement that is in the world without contracting some of its pollution. The clothes represent that which is most outward; but uncleanness must not be allowed to remain even there; it must be cleansed by that water which is mentioned in John iii. 5, and Titus iii. 5.

In the evening, when this body is laid down to await the morning of actual resurrection, the uncleanness ceases; but not till then.

VER. 26. A similar uncleanness is now said to cleave to any who touch the carcasses of the unclean beasts. Both the uncleanness and the purification are the same as that which has been mentioned above. But it was necessary to show how many and varied are the pollutions which must be avoided. Even a contact with that which merely wants the power of separation from earth is sufficient to communicate defilement. This shows the need of unceasing and minute watchfulness in the seemingly smallest matters.

VER. 26. A further characteristic of the beasts to be avoided is now added, as if to show the need of still more

minute discrimination, seeing that uncleanness can be communicated even by a touch.

“Every beast which divideth the hoof, and is not cloven-footed, nor cheweth the cud.”

We must take care not to be mistaken—there are cases in which we are likely to be—there are some animals which divide the hoof, but not entirely; so that they are not cloven-footed; nor do they chew the cud.

As an instance, we have mentioned, “Whatsoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beasts that go on all four.” These would have still less facility for detaching themselves from earth, and even less power of activity upon it. Though they might divide the hoof, and have a great spreading foot, they were not cloven-footed, nor did they chew the cud.

VER. 29. Next follows an enumeration of certain unclean animals, which in some respects belong to the class of beasts; but their habits determine them to be “creeping things;” for they “creep upon the earth.” They do, indeed, neither chew the cud, nor are they cloven-footed; but, in their case, these are not the points to be noticed. The special characteristic by which they are marked is “creeping upon the earth.” And this in itself is a sufficient indication that they are to be avoided. Specific instances are given, and it is said, “These are unclean to you among all that creep.” But there is no mention of any which were not unclean, and subsequently it is stated more fully (ver. 41), “Every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth shall be an abomination.”

“The mouse” is spoken of, in Isa. lxvi. 17, as being eaten by evil persons upon whom judgment was coming. “The snail,” as melting in the sun (Ps. lviii. 8). “The mole,” as being the companion of the bat (Isa. ii. 20).

The general law in regard to contact with these creatures is the same as before. But their great uncleanness is still more especially marked :—" And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean." Then follows an enumeration of certain things which may be thus contaminated, and the processes to which they must be subjected.

" Whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be *put into water*, and it shall be unclean until the even ; *so* shall it be cleansed."

Death has polluted everything, and while it remains all is unclean. To Adam, when he had come under its power, God said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." It is in the knowledge of life, of the curse removed, that anything is clean to us. And accordingly, the vessels, raiment, &c., were to be "put into water," the sign of regeneration. They would thus be immediately clean ; but were to be left immersed until the evening, to show that we must live in the cleansing power of resurrection, and regard all things from its point of view, until the day of life has come to its close. If we fail to do this, we may sometimes be debarred from things which are really lawful. For although there is nothing unclean of itself, and we are told not to call that unclean which God has cleansed, yet "to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean ;" but he is thereby proved to be "weak in the faith." The real source of defilement is not in implements, raiment, or even food ; but, as our Lord has declared, "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, these are the things which defile a man."

The great sheet filled with unclean things which God

had cleansed, and let down to the earth before Peter, seems to indicate resurrection purity; for it came down from heaven, and was taken up thither again.

In 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5, we read, "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (or rather, "intercession").

Now the word of God is the power of resurrection; for it is the *incorruptible* seed by which we are born again. And the intercession is that of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who *is* raised from the dead, and, standing in the presence of God in heaven, has thus taken hold of blessing for us, the blessing which shall soon be manifested, and is even now apprehended by faith, so as to make all things clean to us.

A specification of things to be purified is mentioned in Numb. xxxi. 20, in the account of the return of the Israelites from the slaughter of the Midianites. It includes "all raiment, and all that is made of skins (instruments, or vessels, of skins, marg.), and all work of goats' hair, and all things made of wood."

But there is also mention of gold, silver, and other metals. These were to pass through the fire for their purification; and the general command is added: "Everything that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean; nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of separation; and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water."

The purification by water was absolutely necessary, and without it the articles could not be brought into the camp.

But to return to the text we are considering, we find

in it "whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done."

Here is evidently a reference to the daily occupations of this life, which are ever subject to pollution from the carcases of earth-creeping reptiles. We can only take them up in the purity of resurrection power. This is shown plainly in Col. iii., where it is said: "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man. . . . Whatsoever ye do . . . do all in the name of the Lord Jesus . . . do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

Vessels of wood are spoken of in 2 Tim. ii. 20, in connection with the denial of the resurrection. The point in question there is service. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

Raiment is that wherein we ordinarily appear before the eyes of the world. In this we must show that our motives, feelings, desires, and objects, are different from those of other men, in that they are not polluted with death, and do not find their end in earthly purpose, or carnal gratification. We must do everything as unto the Lord; as having purified our raiment in the daily practice of putting off the old man with the deceitful lusts.

VER. 33. "And every earthen vessel whereinto any of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it."

This shows that there is no compromise to be made with nature in ourselves; it is altogether polluted, and all that is in it is unclean: for "out of the heart proceed

evil thoughts," &c. It must be broken; the flesh must be crucified (vi. 20).

VER. 34. "Of all meat which *may be eaten*," &c.

For the question here is not whether anything be in itself simply right. Nay, it may even be needful, and yet if it be done in nature, to the gratification of self, and not unto the Lord, it is unclean.

VER. 35. "And everything whereupon any part of their carcase falleth shall be unclean; whether it be oven, or ranges for pots, they shall be broken down."

Whatsoever we are unable to use without coming in contact with this deadly pollution must be avoided. There is no room allowed for plea or excuse; there must be no temporising: it is not a question of expediency, but of cleanness or uncleanness in the sight of God. "They are unclean, and shall be unclean unto you."

VER. 37, 38. The Lord uses the figures of seed for the Word of God, the communication of the principles of divine truth, the gospel. When the knowledge of this is low and confined, there may be much of ignorant contact with defilement and yet no uncleanness, because the understanding of the true principles of action is indistinct. But when there is a knowledge of resurrection, and, consequently, of the state and power of separation, all contact with pollution must be avoided.

VER. 39, 40. "If any beast, of which ye may eat, die," &c.

These verses refer to the great principle of evil against which we have already been variously warned. We must shun the contamination of death wherever we may find it. And so universally prevalent is it that even in the very principles upon which we are rightly acting

there may be a mixture of evil, for which we shall find no absolute remedy until the close of life. For the clothes may be washed, but the man is unclean until the evening. And the contamination is incurred not only by eating of the clean beast which has died, but even by bearing its carcase.

VER. 41. Again the prohibition of creeping things is repeated, and we are thus forcibly warned against all tampering with evil, of which uncleanness before God is the fearful result.

VER. 42. Some additions follow which mark more distinctly the character of creeping things. "Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon all four, or whatsoever doth multiply feet" (marg.).

The first of these particulars points to the serpent who brought evil and death into the world. The listening to him was the beginning, as it will be the climax, of evil. We are warned first against him, and then against all who are tending to his condition, and are being transformed into his likeness. The first step towards this is the going upon all four, then follows the multiplying of feet upon the earth, and lastly comes the going altogether upon the belly, the becoming entirely like to the serpent.

VER. 43. Yet again the injunction to avoid creeping things is strongly urged, upon the ground of the greatest motive and reason of all:—"For I am the Lord your God: Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy: for I am holy." "For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy." God here contrasts Himself with that which He commands His people to avoid; for He is the *living* God. The motive to obedience is the deliverance which He has

wrought, and is completing, in bringing His people, after their rescue from Egypt, into likeness and conformity to Himself.

VER. 46. "This is the law of the beasts, &c., to make a difference between the clean and the unclean."

God has fully and distinctly marked the path of sanctification in which His people are to walk; He has left nothing uncertain or indefinite. There is no excuse for the consciousness of remaining uncleanness, nor does it admit of any palliation; for it is nothing less than disobedience. It is the duty of God's people, while on earth, to make distinction between unclean and clean, and He has given them full and specific directions.

We may note that the cleansing in this chapter is not by means of an offering, or through the medium of the priest. Every individual was to do what was needed for himself. The priest merely communicated the instruction which was to be obeyed.

CHAPTER XII.

PURIFICATION AFTER CHILDBIRTH.

IN the former chapter the commandments are given to Moses and Aaron jointly ; for there we have no new directions as to offering, &c., but instructions, for Aaron's guidance, in teaching the children of Israel the difference between unclean and clean.

But the contents of this chapter are delivered to Moses only. They have reference to a special instance of uncleanness, for which an offering and priestly interference would be required.

The instruction is to "the children of Israel," through Moses, and includes that which needed to be known and done both by themselves and the priests.

The circumstances of this ordinance, though special, are universal, belonging to every woman of whom a child is born into the world.

The offerings appointed are a burnt offering and a sin offering. Acceptance and freedom of access to God needed to be known, and sin to be put away ; for the case involved sin and uncleanness.

In chaps. xiii.-xv., in the law of leprosy, &c., we have the outward manifestation of the uncleanness rankling within. Here we have its inbred character, as in Ps. li. 5, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

VER. 2. "The woman" in scripture presents to us

the Church in various aspects or characters. First, as a "help meet" for Adam (Gen. ii. 20). Then, as "bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh" (v. 23). As the source from whence all the children spring, "the mother of all living" (iii. 20). As the one who yielded to temptation, and first transgressed (Gen. iii. Compare 1 Tim. ii. 14).

In Rev. xii., the woman is seen in heaven, as the bearer of *the* man-child. And in the present passage the ordinance, to which reference is made, is connected with the offspring of the woman, born in the appointed course. From Seth (*i.e.*, "Appointed") we trace the genealogy in Luke, which terminates in the birth of the Lord Jesus. He is the true Man-child, springing from the mother of all living. So in the course of gradual development, the Church, the maid-child, is produced; and, in the separation of resurrection life, the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty come into being.

This, however, does not take place in natural course; for they are "by nature the children of wrath even as others;" but by the grace of God in cleansing and quickening those who by nature were under the curse.

Such are the facts which seem to be intimated by the present ordinance. And first, as to the man-child, "she shall be unclean seven days." This, as ever in such cases, is the entire and complete period of nature, during which the innate uncleanness remains. And in these circumstances are the children, as partakers of flesh and blood, produced. But on the eighth day the man-child was to be circumcised. And thus do we enter by faith into the purity of resurrection through death, as is fully shown in Col. ii. 11; "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ."

But she must further "continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days."

The Lord Jesus came in nature, and thus fulfilled the seven days; but His circumcision on the eighth day was the sign of death to the natural life. After circumcision, He was presented in the temple, and "*the Lord's Christ*" was recognised. With the sign and seal of the ordinance upon Him, He goes forth on His ministry, beginning at thirty years of age, and continuing during three years; even as He Himself says, "To-day, and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." Of these times His type and forerunner, David, presents an example; for he reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem, the city of the great King (2 Sam. v. 5). But the Church may be considered as the mother, as well as the maid-child; for she travails in birth with the children of God. And she must know, not only the power of Christ's resurrection, but also the fellowship of His sufferings, which is inseparable from it. (Compare Heb. ii. 10, 11; iii. 1; xii. 1-11; 1 Pet. iv. 12-19, and John xvii. 18, 19.) And this fellowship is learnt in the thirty-three days during which the Church continues in the blood of her purifying. And, perhaps, as in her Lord's case, she finds the last three days, "to-day, to-morrow, and the third day," a time of special trial in faithfulness and ministry.

Such is her period of actual connection and contact with nature, during which no hallowed thing must be touched, and there is no access to the sanctuary. The power of resurrection is indeed known, that was set forth in the circumcision; but the removal of every actual hindrance is not until the Lord's Christ is presented in the temple at the end of the three and thirty days, and the burnt offering and sin offering have been offered (see

Luke ii. 21-38, and compare Heb. ii.). Then at length shall those words have their fullest meaning;—"Behold I and the children which God hath given me."

These thirty and three days are also the time during which we learn the distinction, before mentioned, between clean and unclean.

But thus far the Church's condition is shown rather as in mystical union with Christ, as resulting from the birth of the Man-child and His circumcision; while her period of service is made identical with His. But we get her actual circumstances more fully in the birth of the maid-child, as referred to in 1 Tim. ii. 15;—"She shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."

In the double period of seven days, we may see the Church's knowledge of her standing by faith, and the expectation of its actual manifestation; her mystical participation in the death and resurrection of Christ, and her assurance of the resurrection of the body.

With respect to the prolonged period of the sixty-six days, we know that "the longsuffering of the Lord is salvation." In the dispensation of the fulness of times it will be seen that, through all the ages of evil, not one of Christ's people has been lost. And we must take heed lest we grow weary and impatient at the tarrying of the Lord. It is the part of *scoffers* to say, "Where is the promise of His coming?" See 2 Peter iii. The Lord "*finished* the work which was given *Him* to do," and when the Church has finished her task, then will the end come.

Just as we found a difference, in the birth of the Man-child, between the seven days of uncleanness, and the thirty and three of purifying, so in this latter case it is said: "She shall be unclean two weeks, as in her *separa-*

tion, and she shall continue in the blood *of her purifying* threescore and six days."

At the close of this period she is to bring a burnt offering and a sin offering, to make atonement; and then "she shall be cleansed from her issue of blood." Then, after her perfect acceptance and the ground of it have been shown, her life also shall be manifested. During her protracted period of purifying it had been hidden with Christ in God; but now at length Christ, Who is her life, shall appear, and she shall also appear with Him in glory.

The issue of blood, the sign that death had not yet been altogether overcome, shall also be cleansed. This, as we may see from Matt. v. 20, shall be by the touch of faith, even if it reach but to the hem of His garment. And so, in this case, the sin offering is the smallest of all, a young pigeon. The burnt offering is a lamb; but if the woman be not able to bring that, a young pigeon will be accepted. In either case we are pointed to the sufficiency of Christ, the quality of the offering merely indicating the Church's apprehension of that sufficiency. Compare Luke ii. 24, and xviii. 8.

Then "*she shall be clean.*" It is said in the first place, that she shall be unclean *seven* days. Afterwards her uncleanness is not mentioned, but her purifying. The result is that she becomes clean, and is now fully free to touch the hallowed things, and to enter into the sanctuary.

During the time of the Church's continuance in the blood of her purifying the outward development of the inward evil will show itself, and the knowledge will be acquired of that which is provided to work a radical cure, and which is expounded in the following chapters.

CHAPTER XIII.

LEPROSY.

IN this chapter there is a further occasion for the use of the discerning judgment of the priest in marking the difference between clean and unclean, and particulars are given to guide the exercise of that judgment. Consequently, the directions are delivered to Aaron jointly with Moses.

Doubtless the instructions are such as would enable the priest to form a correct opinion in regard to the existence of the natural disease; just as the beasts specified as unclean were probably less wholesome for food than those which were allowed as clean. But we have in either case to deal with the typical and moral meaning.

The first instance of uncleanness is that of *a woman*. The present one begins with the words, "When *a man*," &c. But a little further on (ver. 29-38) we read "If a man or woman," &c. For the woman first sinned and was in the transgression, but the man listened to her; and the condition into which they were both brought, that is sin, was transmitted to their children, both male and female.

The ordinance of leprosy points to intrinsic sinfulness in man and woman. There is no imparted or imputed uncleanness, as in the case of touching; nor is there uncleanness of circumstances, as in the case of child-bearing. But there is intrinsic impurity to be simply

detected, as being in the person, by certain marks which would indicate and prove its presence. On this point the judgment of the priest was to be exercised ; for there was a certain resemblance between the appearance of the deep-seated disease of leprosy, which constituted uncleanness, and that of a mere external "scab."

VER. 1-8. In these verses we have the indications by which the priest was to judge of the existence of the disease, and distinguish between what was merely external, though it might present symptoms like those of leprosy, and the actual disease itself.

The indications which render it necessary that a person should be brought to the priest are the appearing, in the skin of his flesh, of a "rising, a scab, or a bright spot—any outward sign which would naturally lead to the inference that there was something wrong within. With such a taint a man might not enter into the sanctuary of the Lord, or dwell among His people. There was also the danger of communicating the disorder to others ; or, at any rate, an *appearance* of uncleanness, which ought not to be in the holy people of God. It was the place of the priest to judge of the true character of the malady. The suspected person must be "brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests."

VER. 3. "The priest shall look on the plague in the skin of his flesh ; and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy : and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean."

The chief point to be observed is whether the disease lies deeper than the skin, thus proving that it is internal uncleanness manifesting itself there.

The hair is the natural covering of man ; or rather—as we may, perhaps, infer from its partial growth—an attempt, as it were, of nature to provide a covering after nakedness had been discovered and felt. White is ever in Scripture the emblem of purity. Such, then, is the character of this sure indication of the disease : it gives to that which is the covering and ornament of nature the appearance of purity.

Thus the great distinguishing mark of sin is that it is internal, existing within the nature of man, while its course is to hide its loathsomeness, to disguise its true character, under the semblance of purity. But God has marked the true distinction, and the priest, if he follow the directions, will not be mistaken. The symptom is seen upon the skin ; but the priest's eye detects whether it lies deeper, and the white hair, which might deceive the unwise as an appearance of health, is known to him as the sure sign of disease.

Man is ever endeavouring to palliate his guilt, and to attribute the proofs of it to the influence of accidental circumstances ; but there are sufficient indications that it proceeds from the corrupted source within.

VER. 4. Yet there might be characteristics in the diseased appearances which would justify the priest in waiting, and suspending his judgment for a while.

“ If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white, then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague seven days.” At the close of this time he was to be inspected, and, if the plague had not spread in the skin, was to be shut up for seven days more. And if again, on the second seventh day, the plague was somewhat dark and had not spread, it

was but a scab. The man had but to wash his clothes, and would then be clean.

In this case the appearance of purity is in the spot itself—not in the hair that grows from it—and it does not seem to be deeper than the skin. But these facts are not sufficient to decide the matter, and the priest shuts up the person for seven days. We have here, as before, the seven days of nature, and there is but one thing which can check the progress of its evil, and that is the power of resurrection. Accordingly, there is a further space of seven days, which constitutes the proof, the power of resurrection manifested. After this, if the plague be at a stay, there is no internal disease. The appearance has become somewhat dark, there is no longer the false colour of whiteness; the spot is nothing more than it appears to be, a scab.

But this description would fully apply only to Him Who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and yet, alone of those born of women, was found in the proof to be without sin. The double seven days may refer to the period of His own personal trial, and the trial of His mystical body; and in this sense alone can the judgment of "clean" be pronounced on any but Himself.

After He had been proved to be sinless, He washed His clothes in resurrection: He put off the likeness of sinful flesh, and stood in His intrinsic purity.

But the full proof of cleanness would consist in the scab being at a stay; for, notwithstanding the appearances just mentioned, if, after the man had been seen for his cleansing, the scab continued to "spread much abroad," the priest should pronounce him unclean. There is no resurrection life unless there be some power of it manifested in the subduing of evil.

Thus, then, the loathsomeness of leprosy marks the condition of all men by nature, and the instance here mentioned of actual cleanness, even though there be the appearance of disease, belongs only to the Lord Jesus. The union of any with Him in His sinlessness is not yet the subject of direct allusion.

The true character of this leprosy is shown in Aaron's intercession with Moses on behalf of Miriam (Numb. xii. 11, 12); "Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb."

VER. 9-23. The judgment in these verses is still to decide in regard to the existence of leprosy, though the passage commences by declaring its existence, and thus shows that it is our condition by nature. The true judgment of the priest sees the disease in all but One Man. He marks the cleanness or uncleanness in individual cases by the directions given.

The former paragraph treated only of doubtful appearances, for which the man was brought to the priest.

The present deals with cases of the actual existence of disease, in which the priest is to judge whether the leprosy constitutes uncleanness or not. Then follows the ordinance of cleansing for those in whom the plague is healed. They too, are to be brought to the priest; but, in this instance, the priest must go forth out of the camp, into the place of the leper's banishment, and he that has been healed, though clean, must go through the process of cleansing before he can be restored.

VER. 10, 11. Self-righteousness, pride, the parade of purity and good intentions, the puffing up of the flesh,

are sure signs of the existence of sin uncleansed. This may be decided at first sight: for we have here no doubtful case needing consideration or delay; the true state is perfectly clear and evident (John ix. 41).

VER. 12, 13. The consciousness and acknowledgment of sin is a proof that it has been put away. But the priest shall consider. It must be a full and complete acknowledgment, without a single self-righteous plea. The proof of sin then becomes the proof of sin put away. (Compare Isaiah lxiv. 6; John ix. 41.)

VER. 14, 15. There must, however, be no puffing up of the flesh remaining; for, if that be seen, it is the evidence of still abiding uncleanness. According to the margin, the symptom is "the quickening of living flesh."

VER. 16, 17. But if that be subdued, and the consciousness of sin be so full as to overcome this "living flesh," the man is clean.

VER. 18-23. Hezekiah is an instance of one whom the Lord chastened by the means of the boil here mentioned (2 Kings xx.; Isaiah xxxviii.). But, after he was healed, it was proved by the result of his chastening, that he had a disease far more deeply seated, which required a more powerful and radical cure. Nothing short of death and resurrection was sufficient. And so was it also with Job. The boil may be seen when the deep-seated corruption of leprosy is healed; but the sure signs of distinction are given, and are the same, with little variation, as in the case of the "scab." The appearance of the sore boil does not prove in itself either the presence or the absence of leprosy. There may be some remaining evil of the flesh which the Lord can use in chastening when the leprosy is healed. The boil does mark evil and corruption; but it may be only in the skin, a burning boil.

It may also, however, give rather a different appearance to the signs which are indicative of leprosy ; and hence an additional symptom is here mentioned, viz., that the white rising or bright spot may look "somewhat reddish." But, with this difference, the sure marks which guide the priest's judgment will still be the same.

And if they be found upon the suspected person, he is to be shut up for seven days, and the ultimate judgment is made to depend upon the staying or spreading of the spot. But the disease of leprosy, as also that of sin, will never get better by being left to itself. Therefore its staying indicates the work of an unseen hand.

There is also, probably, reference made here to Him Who partook of the afflictions and sufferings of our nature, without incurring any of its taint. He continued shut up during His seven days of trial, but the spot spread not ; He was clean.

VER. 24-28. The same directions are to be followed in the case of a "hot burning," both as regards the shutting up, and the final judgment. If it does not spread, it is "an inflammation of the burning," not the leprosy.

The boil and the burning may be used by the Lord for chastening judgment, and, though they may have their origin in the man, are not indicative of intrinsic uncleanness. They may be the means of bringing out the inward taint to view, and indeed often are. The bright spot may appear in the "boil," or in "the quick flesh of the burning ;" and, if it does, must be judged by the signs previously described.

VER. 29-37. The next instance is,—“If a man or a woman have a plague upon the head or the beard.” The woman, specially mentioned in this and the following case, shows that there is some reference to the Church.

In the history of Samson (Judges xvi.), the hair of the head is a sign of strength, and its loss by cutting off indicative of weakness. So also is it apparently in the case of the nation of Israel (Isa. vii. 20). It is a sign of comeliness in Cant. iv. 1; vi. 5; and also in 2 Sam. xiv. 25, 26. Plucking off the hair betokens shame and contempt (Isa. l. 6); and baldness is also a sign of shame (Isa. iii. 24). Cutting off the hair expresses sorrow and humiliation (Jer. vii. 29). In Numb. vi. the Nazarite, by allowing his hair to grow, seems to signify the dedication of all his strength and comeliness to the Lord. In 1 Cor. xi. the woman's hair is suffered to grow in sign of subjection; and long tresses are a glory to her, because they are given to her for a covering, and to mark her subjection to the man, even as that of the Church to Christ. For the woman is the glory of the man, as the Church is that of Christ; but the man is the glory and image of God, therefore his head is to be shorn and uncovered.

In this case, then, the disease is manifested in that which is man's strength and comeliness. He was made in the image of God; but in the very characteristics of his divine origin—his power, his intelligence, his beauty, &c.—there the signs of this inwardly rankling disease appear.

VER. 30. One of the symptoms specified is the appearance of "a thin yellow hair." Yellow is once used (Ps. lxxviii. 13) in connection with gold. It seems here to signify the assumption of some appearance of righteousness; and this, though ever so faint, is a sure sign of disease. The spot is a dry scall; there is not a sufficiency of healthy nourishment proceeding from within to maintain the appearance of comeliness without. On the ground of these appearances the man is to be shut up

seven days, and the final judgment is to be decided, as before, by the staying or spreading of the scall, &c. But we have here the double seven days; and during the second week the man was to be shaven, excepting the scall; but only, of course, if after the first week the plague had not spread, was in sight no deeper than the skin, and had not produced yellow hair.

The shaving is the taking away of all his strength and comeliness; and if then the scall do not spread, he is clean. But if, after this process, the plague continue to spread, no other sign is needed. The priest shall not trouble to look for the yellow hair; the man is unclean. There has been a seven days perfect trial of nature, and a seven days trial of nature shorn of its comeliness by the knowledge of death; and yet the disease does but increase.

But if the scall be in the priest's sight at a stay, and there be black hair—which is at once the sign of mourning, and a more natural colour—the man is clean; the *scall is healed*.

VER. 38, 39. Here the symptom is that of a man or a woman having “bright spots” in the skin of their flesh.

This is the slightest of the indications which God has given of leprosy. If, however, the spots be darkish white, they are but freckled spots in the skin of the flesh; the person is clean.

VER. 40, 41. The loss of the appearance of strength and comeliness, whether total or partial, is not in itself a sign of this disease, but rather the contrary.

VER. 42-44. Yet neither is it in itself a sign of purity; for if, in either the entire or partial loss of the hair, there be in the place of it “a white reddish sore”—such is its peculiar characteristic in this instance—the man is

leprous, "utterly unclean; his plague is in his head." This last symptom is marked as a most sure and special sign of utter uncleanness. It is the case of entire disregard of their evil condition by men under the curse of death, who are thus deprived of all strength and comeliness, and have no connection with the living Head, Who is the resurrection and the life.

VER. 45, 46. "And the leper in whom the plague is, *his clothes shall be rent.*"

This sign is used in Scripture to represent sorrow, anger, distress, and humiliation.

"*His head bare.*" The priests who had access to God were not to uncover their heads, because they had that access; this man is not to cover his head.* This was a sign of exposure. No covering could be allowed where the disease existed; the evil must be open and manifest to all.

"*He shall put a covering upon his upper lip.*" This expresses sorrow for loss of blessing, as in the death of friends, &c. See Ezek. xxiv. 17, where it is connected with eating "the bread of men," partaking in the sorrows of death. In Micah iii. 7, it is a mark of sorrow and shame assumed by those who have been discarded of God, and can obtain no answer from Him.

"*And shall cry, Unclean, unclean.*" This is a public announcement from himself of his condition, and a warning, lest any clean person should approach him. It shows how unmistakably God has branded the sad condition of man by nature, and it may also intimate that consciousness of uncleanness which is preparatory to cleansing.

* In the Church the man is not to be covered because Christ Who is in the presence of God has been manifested. The Jew still covers his head in the presence of God.

Such was to be his condition during all the days of his defilement. His place was to be "without the camp," and there he was to "dwell alone." He is thus cut off as unfit for the companionship of God's people; he must live alone. Yet his habitation, sad and sorrowful though it be, is blessed; for thither the priest goes out to him. And it is in such solitary places that our great Priest, having come forth, has found one and all of us.

God's tabernacle itself was at first pitched outside the camp (Exod. xxxiii. 7). And the Lord Jesus Himself scorned not to come into the same place of exile, into our circumstances. This He Himself shows at the commencement of His ministry (Matt. viii. 2-4).

Thus even our sad condition by nature is turned into a blessing, because it has brought to light the fulness of God's grace.

In chap. xiv., we have in detail that which is so simple in manifest action in Matt. viii. 2-4, and indeed in the whole course of the ministry of the Lord Jesus, from His incarnation to His coming in glory.

But, before this is fully declared, there must be notice of the uncleanness which cleaves to the garments of the leper; for even thus far has the disease spread.

VER. 47-59. "*The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in,*" &c.

The uncleanness of the person has been already shown. We are no longer concerned with it, but with that which is intimately connected with it, which covers it, and meets the eye of the observer. In other words, the present passage has regard to what a man does, and not directly to what he is. But the outward act is ever tainted by the pollution of that from which it proceeds.

The garments are said to be made of wool, of linen, or of

skin, &c. Skin is that which at the first God used to make garments for man. And both the wool and linen are referred to in Scripture as being pure in themselves (Isa. i. 18; Rev. xix. 14), though, like garments in general, perishable and corruptible. The priests are here taught how to discern whether these things have partaken of the disease before discovered to exist in the person of the man who wore them.

Wool is that which comes from the flock, linen grows in the earth; and both are wrought by men's hands, as are also the skins (Prov. xxxi. 13). Fine linen was carried out of Egypt by the Israelites, and it was brought thence in the reign of Solomon (2 Chron. i. 16).

Those who had access to the presence of the Lord in the tabernacle were to appear there in linen clothes, and were forbidden to do so in woollen (Lev. xvi. 4; Ezek. xlv. 17). The reason given for the prohibition is,—“They shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat.”

The *apparent* condition in which we stand by nature in these garments is shown in Scripture by the epithet “filthy.” Isa. lxiv. 6 (where both the personal and outward uncleanness are spoken of); Zech. iii. 3 (where we learn whence the clean garments are obtained). Compare Phil. iii. 9; Rev. xix. 14; Rom. iii. 22.

Hence we may discern the secret cause and origin of the manifest uncleanness so often referred to in Scripture, the pollution which by nature cleaves to and pervades our every act. For it is thoroughly and intimately wrought up in the fabric of our garments of whatever kind they may be. Even the skins, which God Himself provided, are not free from it, either in themselves, or when worked by the hand of man.

The woollen garments point to acts of service or work among our fellow creatures ; the linen to that which relates more specially to God, to priestly service ; while the skin is that which all may appropriate, seeing that it is the covering which God first gave to man.

There is an express command that the two former fabrics shall not be mingled together in one garment (Lev. xix. 19). Our failure by nature in all actions shows yet more fully, beyond our personal need of resurrection, how everything must be done in the realising consciousness of receiving all from God, of being united with Christ, and of having power and purity in this way, and in this way only.

The proof that the disease exists in a garment is its being "greenish or reddish ;" the former colour being the sign of the flourishing condition of trees, the latter that of health and life, the hue of blood. But here both are out of place, and are, therefore, the disgusting evidence of disease. And the taint is found in the warp and woof ; it is not merely outward, but it is also intrinsic. The garment thus discoloured is to be shut up for seven days, and if at the end of that time the plague be found to have spread, it is a "fretting leprosy," and the garment must be burnt. If the plague be not spread, the garment must be washed and shut up for seven days more. And this time the test is whether the plague has changed its colour ; for if it has not, though it may not have spread, yet the garment is unclean. It may be "bare within or without," but it ought to have changed its colour, and if it has not, it is "fret inward," and must be burnt. But if the plague be "somewhat dark " after the washing, then the part diseased shall be torn out of the garment, and if the plague spread or appear in it

afterwards, it shall be burnt. But if the plague be departed, it shall be washed the second time, and then it shall be clean.

The only circumstances of cleanness are after the plague has been found to be at a stay, the diseased piece torn out, and the garment twice washed, the second washing taking place after the plague has departed.

We have this point illustrated in 1 Cor. iii. For the question of personal safety and acceptance is distinct from that of reward for service.

The double seven days appear in this case, as before. The first week, that of nature, brings nothing to decision but what is to be burnt in the fire. And in the second, the power of resurrection, there is still that which has to be torn out and destroyed. This is something of nature yet remaining; for we cannot altogether get rid of our intrinsic corruption in this life. But when that is torn away, the true cleansing can proceed: and the final act, the washing in the water of actual resurrection, makes all clean and ready for the eighth day of manifestation.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PURIFICATION OF THE LEPER.

VER. 1-32. We have here in a special ordinance, given to Moses alone (since these are directions for priestly service, not instruction in the exercise of it), "*the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing.*" The "day of his cleansing" marks the oneness and identification of the whole matter in its various details. The leper is brought to the priest, and that is the act of faith which is the gift of God. The priest goes out to the leper, and so exhibits the grace of the Lord coming forth to seek and to save that which is lost. They meet in the place and circumstances into which the leper's condition has brought him, without the camp (Matt. viii.; Luke xvii. 12). Then, when the priest sees that the leprosy is healed, he proceeds with the process of cleansing (Luke xvii. 14). The healing is the secret act of God's power; the cleansing is the detailed apprehension of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. See John iii.; Eph. i. 2.; 1 John v. 1.

The disease of leprosy brands man as utterly lost and degraded by nature; he has found out that death is the wages of sin; and in this condition his first need, without which every other blessing would be nothing, is life.

And the supply of his need is typified by the offering of the two birds, for which there is no specific designa-

tion. It is neither burnt offering, nor sin offering—these come afterwards. But in the mean time a new offering meets the cleansed leper's necessity, and exhibits life through death. And it does so in the first period of seven days: the eighth day is occupied with other things.

VER. 4. The first offering consists, then, of "*two birds.*" This signifies man's low condition as regards his apprehension of the value of the sacrifice needed, and, perhaps, also points to the first dawning of the light of life as made known of God previously to the resurrection of the Lord Himself on the eighth day, when the life was fully manifested. It may be that we have an allusion to this passage in Matt. x. 29.

But the birds were to be "*alive and clean.*" This command exhibits the requirements of the case, which were life and purity; for the evil was death and uncleanness. And to exhibit this life and purity, together with the death through which alone they could be obtained, two birds were necessary. For it was not within the compass of one creature to furnish a type of Him Who had "power to lay down His life and take it up again;" Who was "put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit;" and Who "through death destroyed him that had the power of death."

"*Cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop.*" These with the "alive and clean" birds, and the earthen vessel over which one of them was to be killed, combine to give the whole character of the offering.

The cedar is emblematical of exalted grandeur and excellency, a lofty and flourishing condition. See Cant. v. 15; Ps. xcii. 12; Ezek. xxxi. 8. In 1 Kings iv. 33, it is placed in direct contrast with the hyssop, which is named as the lowliest of plants. The Lord Jesus and

His own are constantly typified in Scripture by the emblem of the cedar; and we find the place and circumstances of His identification with the hyssop in John xix. 29. Compare Phil. ii. 8 with John xix. 28-30. But in this ordinance the requirement is cedar-wood, which seems to show that the intrinsic nature of the cedar, rather than its lofty height, typified the character of the Lord Jesus.

Scarlet in Scripture is emblematical of splendour, high station, and imperial dignity. See 2 Sam. i. 24; Dan. v. 7; Matt. xxvii. 28, 29; Rev. xvii. 3, 4; xviii. 12, 16.

A scarlet thread marked the first-born of the twins of Tamar (Gen. xxxviii. 28); and was also the sign of the deliverance of Rahab (Josh. ii. 18): while in Cant. iv. 3, the beautiful lips of the bride are likened to it. The colour is also used to mark the extremity of the evil condition of sin, as in Isa. i. 18. All these particulars wondrously illustrate the character of Him Who was represented by the scarlet. And His was the regal dignity by right, though men gave it to Him in derision. The scarlet is mentioned between the cedar and the hyssop. For the Lord's kingly dignity does not belong to His highest and divine character exclusively, nor yet to His condition of humiliation; but it is given to Him as the exalted Son of man, the One That is worthy of it. He has put away the hindrance of sin, and has perfectly obeyed; therefore, the regal dignity is His; for He has thus deserved it.

We have here, then, life and purity, intrinsic personal excellence and exalted glory, the deepest and most entire humiliation, the darkest dye of sin, and the official dignity given to Christ as being worthy.

VER. 5. Then we have death introduced, that which was the needed extent of His humiliation. *One of the*

birds was to be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. This one bird signifies the power the Lord Jesus had to lay down His life; while the earthen vessel points to His assumption of our nature for the purpose of doing so (Heb. ii. 14). The running water is the medium by which this was done, and the blessing of it communicated to others. Compare Heb. ix. 14; Rom. vi. 3; 1 Cor. xii. 13; Eph. ii. 13; Rom. v. 8, 9, 10, &c.

Thus far only death is set forth, and of these things it is said, the priest "shall command" them to be done. The Lord Jesus could not enter fully upon His priestly office until the sacrifice was found, which was Himself. And thus after having served as the sacrifice, He becomes in resurrection life the priest to offer and apply its benefits.

Accordingly, after the one bird has been killed, all that is subsequently done is done by the priest himself; and here we recognise the life appearing after the death.

VER. 6. The priest then takes the living bird, the cedar-wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop, and having dipped them in the blood of the bird killed over the running water, "he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field." And thus he imparts to the person cleansed all the characteristics signified by the things dipped, through the medium of the cleansing blood and the running water.

This is simply the communication by the Spirit to faith of all that Christ is, and our identification with all *by* faith. The life is manifested by the living bird, that is, present peace and liberty; the things which are represented by the cedar-wood, &c., are as yet hidden, but they are secured.

In the power of *this* cleansing the leper must henceforth cleanse himself. All that has been done hitherto has been done by the priest, or at his command, for and to the leper. It is in this place that the "wherefore" so frequently used by Paul in his epistles comes in; there is knowledge and understanding, and there must follow a perfecting of holiness in the fear of God.

VER. 8. The first thing the person to be cleansed is directed to do for himself is to "*wash his clothes.*" This is the immediate outward exhibition of the inward purity which he has obtained; it is that which meets the eye of others, viz., testimony.

He shall "*shave off all his hair,*" thereby renouncing all strength and comeliness in his own person. He shall "*wash himself in water;*" by which is signified the practically "cleansing himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." And this is "the washing of water by the Word" spoken of in the epistles, "the renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Eph. v. 26).

He is now permitted to come "into the camp," but must "tarry abroad out of his tent seven days." Of the camp it is said (Deut. xxiii. 14)—"The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; *therefore* shall thy camp be holy." The man is thus allowed access to God and association with His people, and with their joy of hope; but as yet, during the seven days, he has no actual personal possession of a place. The seventh day has its own appropriate work of cleansing, while on the eighth the sacrifice in all its completeness is to be offered, and it is then, as we have before seen, that the glory of the Lord appears, then that the cleansed leper will have an abiding place as his own.

VER. 9. On the seventh day the cutting of the hair is more specially mentioned; not the least appearance of personal strength or comeliness must be suffered to remain. The man's clothes and flesh are again to be washed in water, and again it is said, "he shall be clean."

The eighth day is near; how urgently does the Lord press upon us the necessity of being "diligent that we may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pet. iii. 14). This was the great end to which Paul was labouring for the saints, that every man should be perfect in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. xi. 2; Col. i. 28, 29; Phil. iv.).

VER. 10. But the cleansing is continued on the eighth day, and then at length it is perfected. We should live in that day by faith, as knowing that all things are already accomplished, as waiting for the glory which is to be revealed. For the perfect practical sanctification of body, soul, and spirit, is the result of the power of those things which are now the subjects of eighth day revelation to faith by the Spirit, and will soon be actually realised. And all things are made known to faith, in order that their unhindered power upon us may prepare us to meet their actual manifestation. Hereafter we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And to strive by faith for the attainment of this *likeness* is now the duty and privilege of every poor leprous sinner.

The eighth day was the day of the complete sacrifice; because it is only in the spiritual power of resurrection that we can obtain a full understanding of what Christ has wrought for us. It was indeed completed long ago, but we have to learn of it, and appropriate it to ourselves. The eighth day in chap. ix. included in its ordinances the priests and the whole congregation assembled before the

door of the tabernacle. Here it is more the concern of an individual, of a leper who is seeking to realise the completion of his cleansing, preparatory to his entering into the full enjoyment of the privilege of the people of God, from which his leprosy had debarred him.

VER. 10. On this eighth day the leper is to bring the offering for himself; and he and his offering are to be presented by the priest at the door of the tabernacle.

The offering is to consist of two he lambs, one ewe lamb of the first year, three tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, and one log of oil.

There is special mention only of the purpose for which one of the animals is required. The priest is to take one he lamb for a trespass offering, and is afterwards directed to sacrifice a sin offering and a burnt offering without any instruction in regard to the animals. But in the primary ordinances the male animal only is used in burnt offering, and a female kid of the goats is appointed for a sin offering for "any one of the common people."

The order here appointed is, first, the trespass offering; then, the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the meat offering.

VER. 12. The priest, after he has presented the leper, together with what he has to offer for his cleansing, before the Lord, is directed to take one he lamb for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the Lord. What is here held up in the hands of the priest for the Lord to look upon is twofold. It is both that which puts away the continual trespass to which the leper in his yet partially cleansed state is liable, and that which will empower him to enjoy the privileges to which the cleansing will entitle him, that is, the Holy Ghost. These open the way for the last general

offering for sin, for the offering of acceptance and full access, and, lastly, for that of service and participation.

The lamb is to be slain in the place where the sin offering and the burnt offering are killed; it is most holy; and, like the sin offering, belongs to the priest. And thus the priest, as here intimated, not only partakes of the sin offering, but knows also the fellowship of continual failure as signified in the trespass offering.

The priest shall then apply the blood of this trespass offering, as the blood of the ram was applied in his own consecration, to the tip of the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot, of him that is to be cleansed. This indicates the special character of his trespass and also of his cleansing. Those members which should be entirely consecrated to God were in the trespass, but are now cleansed.

The oil was then to be applied upon the parts which had been *touched with the blood*. For the Holy Ghost can only be where the cleansing blood is. Afterwards the oil was to be sprinkled seven times before the Lord. And this act seems to indicate that it was in God's sight sufficient for the proposed object. He was satisfied, and the leper might be confident. The remnant of the oil is then poured upon the head of the person to be cleansed. This is his complete anointing, and herein is atonement made for him before the Lord.

Then follows the offering of the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the meat offering; and these, being now presented in full understanding of their value and efficacy, complete the cleansing.

Thus the whole ordinance sets forth the gradual and progressive knowledge of the value and sufficiency of Christ and of our completeness in Him.

The sin offering in this case at once sums up the whole question, of sin, and of sin put away, and of the knowledge that it is so. Therefore there are no particulars mentioned. So also in the burnt offering, the entire question of acceptance is considered to be fully settled ; and, in the meat offering, that of service and participation in all that the altar typified, viz., all that is acceptable to God.

Such are the requirements for the perfect cleansing of a leprous sinner, and they are all to be found in Christ. These rites do but set forth the learning in detail of all that which in Him belongs to us as summed up in the words, "Ye are complete in Him."

And now comes the final declaration of that which was announced on the first day—"he shall be clean."

VER. 21. But here again, as before, the Lord meets in the fulness of His grace the need of one who is "poor, and cannot get so much" as the appointed sacrifices.

The animals for the sin offering and the burnt offering may be replaced by "two turtle doves, or young pigeons," *even such as he is able to get.*" But the trespass offering remains the same ; he *must* know the need of his own case, though his apprehension of *all* the relations of value in that which meets it may be feeble.

The meat offering also may be reduced to one tenth deal instead of three.* This intimates that the man's service, and participation in service, are weak and imperfect : but not so his cleansing ; that is complete and full. Therefore, the oil, in its detailed application, as well as in its pouring out and its sprinkling before the Lord, is used just as when the appointed offering is brought.

* The meat offerings always bear a proportion to the other offerings. See Num. xxviii.

VER. 32. This last ordinance is specially mentioned as "the law of him in whom is the plague of leprosy, whose hand is not able to get that which pertaineth to his cleansing." It tells us, as we are again and again told in Scripture, of the love and grace of God to poor sinners.

VER. 33-53. Now follow further instructions for the exercise of priestly discernment in the case of leprosy in a house. The Lord speaks to Moses and Aaron.

"When ye be come into the land of Canaan," &c., points to the knowledge of full blessing. And, consequently, the infection of a *house* is the subject of this ordinance. The house is the Church in its corporate and collective character, composed of a number of individuals united in the assumed possession of certain privileges. In 1 Tim. iii. 15, we have mention of "the house of God, which is the Church of the living God." And the Epistle to the Ephesians describes the full privilege and blessing that belongs to it, with the Spirit as the seal and earnest.

The Lord is here said to "put the plague in the house." This is the influx of evil into the Church, from want of watchfulness. Compare Mark xiii. 34; Matt. xiii. 25; 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; v. 2; 2 Cor. vi. 15.

The owner of the house is Christ, *the Son* (Heb. iii. 6). In this character He discerns the existence of the evil, and calls into exercise the priestly office. (See Ps. xci. 10; Prov. iii. 33; Lev. v. 4; 1 Pet. ii.; Amos vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii.)

VER. 36. The priest's first proceeding is to *command* that they empty the house before he goes in to see the plague, lest all that is in the house should be made unclean. This is the humbling of the Church, the divesting of ornaments, and renouncing of those appearances which only hinder the discerning of the evil, and tend to

contamination. Compare 1 Cor. iv. 1-16 ; xv. 33 ; Exod. xxxiii. 6 ; Rev. ii., iii. The indications of the disease, which guide the priest to shut up the house, are the colours of its appearance (the same as in the case of the garment), and the fact of the plague being in the walls with hollow streaks, which in sight are lower than the mere surface of the wall.

VER. 38. "The priest shall go out of the house to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days."

On the seventh day he returns to look ; and, if the plague be spread, he directs the removal of the stones in which it is observed, as well as a general precaution in scraping the house "within round about" Then the stones which have been removed, and the dust which has been scraped off, are to be carried without the city, and cast into an unclean place.

The priest leaves the house in order that the disease, if it exist, may manifest itself, and so it does.

This process of cleansing is shown, 1 Cor. v. ; Phil. iii. ; 2 Tim. ii. 21 ; Rev. ii., iii.

Other stones and mortar are then to be supplied in the place of that which has been removed. The character of those who are cast out is seen in Rev. xxii. 15 ; that of the renewed stones, when the plague does not spread, in 1 Cor. vi. 9-11.

But this process of cleansing may not be sufficient ; and if, after it the plague be observed to spread, it is a fretting leprosy ; the house is unclean.

The only thing left to be done is the breaking down and casting out of the whole house (Rev. iii. 16 ; xiv. 18 ; xvii.).

This is the judgment upon the great house. (Compare Zech. v. ; Matt. xxiv. 2 ; Jer. lii. 13 ; 1 Kings ix. 6-9.)

But we presently have the cleansing of the house in which the plague does not spread. The leprosy was there, but has been cleansed. This is the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. It represents those of whom Paul said :—" And such *were* some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God " (1 Cor. vi. 11).

VER. 46. Now follows the law in regard to any man who goes into the house while it is shut up. He is unclean until the even ; while he that lieth or eateth in the house shall wash his clothes.

VER. 48. But if, after the above process of cleansing, the plague do not spread, the priest shall " pronounce the house clean, *because the plague is healed.*" And then he shall proceed to the process of cleansing. This is the same as in the case of a leprous man, all the things before mentioned being required and used. Thus the perfect cleansing of the Church is by blood, the Holy Ghost, life, exalted purity, humility, sin put away, kingly dignity, and fully manifested life and liberty.

VER. 54. Then follows in conclusion the general declaration, that this is the law in all the above cases (from chap. xiii.), of leprosy, &c., " to teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean." The ground of judgment is thus furnished to the priest in detail. But the full and perfect cleanness is only when the process of cleansing the clean is completed, and that cannot be until we are like Him and see Him as He is.

The eighth day is not mentioned for the house, as it is for the individual person. Individually, the full cleansing may be known, so that the person may return to his tent ; though the permission to do so is not specified, for an

abiding in the wilderness, the place of tents, is not supposed. But the house and the city belong to Canaan, and the eighth day is the manifestation of the Church in glory. The present life is the time of cleansing, the seventh day. And the result of it is the removal of every polluted stone, the scraping off of all that contains the infection, the discovering that the plague is at a stay ; and lastly, the offerings for cleansing. All this will be seen to have been accomplished when the eighth day comes.

The cleansed priest is now engaged in the service of cleansing the house.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RUNNING ISSUE.

THIS "law" is given to "Moses and Aaron," to be communicated to "the children of Israel." It is not a case in which the discernment of the priest is called into exercise; but certain indications are given, which should enable all men to detect the uncleanness.

VER. 2. Under the figure of another disease, the deep-seated intrinsic character of sin, as well as its actively contaminating nature, is still more fully set forth. Circumstances have been before mentioned in which the judgment of the priest would be needed to distinguish whether the disease were there or not, and he would be guided in his discernment by the directions given him of God. Here, however, is no doubtful case, but one of positive uncleanness, of which the signs are unmistakably indicative. The symptoms of leprosy might be the marks of a deeper-seated disease, and indeed were; but the running issue exhibits far more definitely the active principle of the corruption working within, of which every manifestation is corruption.

To this the Lord distinctly alludes in Mark vii. 20-23, where, in speaking of the secret cause and character of all man's defilement, He says: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts . . . these defile the man."

VER. 3. They may indeed be checked as to outward

manifestation in actual commission ; but there they are, a "running issue in the flesh," and a foul uncleanness. And of this every man is able to judge for himself : there is no need to go to the priest, that he should point out the existence of the evil ; nor does it avail to come to him with offerings, or for any other purpose, until the evil is put away, and the man cleansed.

VER. 4. The contaminating power of the evil is here most vividly exhibited. The diseased person not only communicates uncleanness to everything which he habitually uses, but whosoever touches any of those things shall also be unclean until the even, and must wash himself and his clothes in water. This shows how everything around us, which man has contrived for his own use and convenience, bears the stamp of sin ; for it originates in sin, and partakes of and communicates its pollution.

VER. 7. The slightest communion with the corrupted nature causes contamination. And even a *clean* person, upon whom the unclean shall spit, shall be unclean until the even. There seems to be a reference in these instances to the imputed uncleanness of the only clean One in our nature, Who, though He knew no sin, was *made* sin for us.

Every circumstance of contact with that which the unclean hath used is declared to be contamination, and every way of contact with the unclean himself produces the same effect. Not merely whosoever shall touch, but whomsoever shall be touched by him, if he have not rinsed his hands in water, he shall be unclean.

VER. 12. As before the vessel of earth that has been touched shall be broken, and the vessel of wood rinsed in water. Our nature must be destroyed, and all other

things undergo the purifying process of resurrection (2 Cor. v. 14-17).

Resurrection purity and the power of it are only noticed as being required in such cases as these, and then by imputation. The Lord Jesus entered into the glorious kingdom, which is denied to flesh and blood, in resurrection. And so is it with regard to those who are cleansed. That uncleanness which was His by imputation, is ours by imputation, impartation, and intrinsic nature. The first Adam was liable to sin; the second Adam was not. But both were partakers of the same nature: the one had sin, and had sinned; the Other had not sinned, but was made sin. Both are partakers of the resurrection, and there all sin is put away, in Christ.

VER. 13. The unseen hand is here, as ever, the power of healing. When the unclean is healed, "he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean." He must, as he is able, thus judge of his state during the time of his continuance in nature, and must know that for the present the power of resurrection, and, at the close of the seven days, actual resurrection, are his cleansing. The *running* water sets forth the living power of the Holy Ghost and union with Christ.

In this cleansed condition the man comes with the necessary offering to the priest, with two doves or pigeons, the one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering.

There is no question of trespass in this case. It is the intrinsic disease, and so the cleansed person understands it. He knows that it is the corruption rankling deeply within that needs to be destroyed; he wants the knowledge of sin put away, and perfect acceptance with God.

This he finds in Christ; for He is both the Priest to offer and the Sacrifice to be offered. The cleansed one knows the value of both, and thus the Priest is able to make "atonement for him before the Lord for his issue."

VER. 16-18. There are not any circumstances in which that which proceeds from nature, or that which is connected with it, do not contract defilement. This case leads us back to that of chap. xii., and marks the condition by nature of all that have ever borne the image of man, save One. He was the sole exception, and it is only as being brought into His circumstances that there can be hope for any. We must be "begotten again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," by the incorruptible seed which is the Word of God.

VER. 19. The like circumstances of universal uncleanness and contamination are attached to the issue of blood. The blood is the life.

This uncleanness typifies that of the Church, the child-bearing woman, during her seven days' period of nature. She is the mother of all living, but is as yet in unclean circumstances. And she has continued so, far beyond the prescribed period, and all these days have been her days of uncleanness. This period is marked as twelve years in the instance of the woman who was so situated in the Gospel (Luke viii. 43).

In the present instance, as before when she is cleansed, "she shall number to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean."

VER. 29. The offering is the same as in the former instance.

VER. 31. This is the prescribed means of separating the children of Israel from their uncleanness, that they

die not in defiling the tabernacle of God's presence. Let us beware how we approach Him.

VER. 32. This is the law providing a remedy for the intrinsic, inborn, sin of man, in all the circumstances in which he is placed ; it is the only deliverance from the evil, and the universal unavoidable contamination.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

THIS chapter gives directions for the priest's access into the holiest of all, for himself and for the congregation. It opens with a reference to the death of Nadab and Abihu, to enforce the necessity for an exact observance of all that the Lord has commanded, as connected with the privilege of access to His presence. If the sons of Aaron, through disregard to the commandment, perished at the altar of burnt offering, how much more would a careful observance of it be needed in the holiest of all !

This is the place into which the high priest alone could enter ; but only once a year, and then not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. And we are further told (Heb. ix. 8), that the Holy Ghost by this signified, "that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." The way into the holy place was, but not yet that which led into the holiest. It is Christ, the High Priest of good things to come, Who has in His own flesh rent the vail, having entered once into the holiest, with His own blood, there to appear in the presence of God for us.

But, in the exact observance of all the details required in these shadows, we learn the perfectness of Him, the great High Priest, Who hath passed into the heavens for us.

All that, which under the shadowy and typical dis-

pensation of the tabernacle was required to be *done*, tells us of what Christ *is*. All that which we are required to do, as shown therein, is required of us only as being brought into union with Him, and as being led by His Spirit to do what He does. It is as having received of His fulness and grace for grace that we offer the sacrifice of a sweet savour acceptable to God; and as good stewards of that grace that we minister the same one to another. It is only thus, in the knowledge and exercise of the power of union and communion with Christ, that we are able to render any service to God or one another. But the highest possible exercise of privilege and service is that which is connected with high priesthood; for it is the privilege of sons, and involves freedom of access to the immediate presence of God Himself. It is here that the true heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and the body washed with pure water, are required (Heb. x. 22). And the consequences which must result from such a privilege are the holding fast the profession of the faith without wavering, the considering one another to provoke unto love and good works, and the not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.

Such are the blessed truths which this chapter unfolds to us. The offerings are those of the high priest for himself and his house, and those which were for the congregation. All is said to be required because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

VER. 1. Death was the consequence of a far more distant approach to God, otherwise than He had commanded. There is no way of access to Him, we can have no discernment of Him at all, excepting in Christ; there may be a feeling after Him, if haply we may find Him; but the end is still death. Yet in Christ God

brings poor sinners into the nearness of children. It is the Father that Jesus has revealed. It is what Christ is that establishes us in the possession of the full privilege. It is the *increasing knowledge* of what Christ is, and communion with Him, that enlarges our capacity for using and enjoying the privilege.

The more we know of Christ, and the more we are conformed to His image (that is, in obedience), the nearer are we in the enjoyment of access to God and communion with Him.

The Lord, in directing Moses to speak unto Aaron of these things, reminds him of the place and circumstances in which His presence was manifested. For, while our approach to God is in and by the Lord Jesus Christ, it is in Christ also that God approaches to us in the manifestation of His presence. The place, its circumstances, and arrangements, are Christ. It is a *holy place*; holy because God is there, that is, essentially holy; it is *within the veil*, that is, the flesh of Christ by which, until it was torn, God was hidden; it is *before the mercy-seat which is upon the ark*, upon the ark containing that which God's righteousness requires.

But, although the tables of stone are there, they are hidden beneath the mercy-seat; for grace has triumphed over all, and revealed that God is love. Not less than this is to be known in the secret of His presence; not that He is gracious only, but that He is love, and that this is His intrinsic nature.

"For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat." And this appearance is not in the repelling terror of righteousness; but it is glorious; it is in the resplendent glory of His own nature, love. The cherubim of glory are *not* mentioned here. See Heb. ix. 5.

Aaron was not to come at all times into this place ; but only in the way, and at the time, appointed of God. We have seen that by this the Holy Ghost testified that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest, and the same truth may be discovered in all the ordinances which show the person of the risen Christ not yet manifested. But it also, in its symbolical character, points us to all the following details, as setting forth the fulness and perfection of Him That was to come :—"Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place."

VER. 3. "With a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering." This shows us what would be needed in general as the offering of any who should come into that holy place. Sin must be put away, and full acceptance *known*. This was the *need* of Aaron and his house, but the perfect and intrinsic condition of the Lord Jesus ; for He was without sin, and in Him God was well pleased. The offerings which would be required for the priest in his official capacity are given afterwards, and though distinct, they are inseparable ; for it is only as priests that we are permitted to enter into the holy place, and it is only thus that the Lord Jesus Himself entered, as it is said, "for us."

VER. 4. The personal condition of Aaron. He must first wash his flesh in water, and then put on the holy linen garments. These signify the knowledge and power of resurrection purity, and the perfect righteousness of God by faith ("the fine linen is the righteousness of saints"). These garments, too, involved all that was required and done at Aaron's consecration, when he first put them on. We have thus the memorial of his condition of holiness and purity, and of that which had been and was the cause of it. Thus much is personally

needed for the exercise of the priestly office in access to the holiest.

But Aaron was not there for himself alone ; for "every high priest taken from among men is ordained *for men* in things pertaining to God." We may learn from this, as elsewhere, the inseparable connection between service and worship, even in their highest exercise. Thus, in proceeding to give the detailed directions for his approach and entrance to the holiest, the Lord directs him to take from the congregation of the children of Israel their offering before he presents his own ; and then bids him do other things on behalf of the congregation, before he kills his own bullock.

The offering of the children of Israel was "two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering."

VER. 6. Aaron is now required to offer the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself, and to make atonement for himself and his house. This offering is preparatory to killing it, which he is not yet directed to do. But he must show that he is himself prepared with that which puts away sin, before he can proceed to act on behalf of others.

VER. 7. He then presents the two goats of the sin offering for the people before the Lord, and casts lots on the goats, one for the Lord, the other for the scape-goat, or Azazel. The goat on which the Lord's lot fell, was to be offered as a sin offering, *the other* was to be presented before the Lord *to make atonement*, and to be let go for a scape-goat into the wilderness. We have in this the manifestation of death and life ; death signifying the bearing of sin, and its penalty ; and life, the evidence that the sin is put away (Rom. iv. 25). "The lot is cast into

the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord " (Prov. xvi. 33). What was required *by God* was that sin should be put away. What the worshipper, the sinner, needed was the *knowledge* that sin was put away, in order to his approach to God. Both requirements are supplied in the symbolism of the two goats.

VER. 11. Aaron is then directed to kill the sin offering, and make atonement for himself and his house. This is the offering of the Lord Jesus upon the cross, when He made "His soul an offering for sin." And at the same time it signifies the sinner's knowledge of Christ's sacrifice, the first step of a sinner's approach to God, indeed, that which brings him nigh, and gives him the privilege to enter at once into the holiest, though he has yet to learn of it and the varied blessings that are involved in it (Eph. ii. 13; Heb. x. 19). But, in the order of the priestly approach, Aaron has first to learn this *for himself*. He is not, indeed, going into the holiest merely for himself; for he is a priest; but he himself has need, for he has sin, which must first be known to be put away, before he can enter into the Presence. He is to bring the blood within the vail, with a cloud of incense arising from the censer that it may cover the mercy-seat, that he die not.

The incense, as we may see in the general directions for making it, is particularly declared to be for God alone. None other is to be made like it, nor may it be used for any other than the appointed purpose. It was to be set before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where God promised to meet with Moses, having been previously beaten very small (Exod. xxx. 36).

It seems to represent the fragrant perfume arising from the Lord Jesus and His offering, understood in its value

and excellency by none but God Himself. And this alone would be a shelter to the worshipper in the divine presence. In Rev. v. 8, incense signifies prayer. Probably, in general, it sets forth Christ pleading the sufficiency and excellency of Himself on our behalf. Here it would signify the value of the blood of the sin offering which was brought before God. He Himself appeared in the cloud upon the mercy-seat, and the cloud of incense was also to cover the mercy-seat; so that, in the blending together of the two, the intimate character of communion might be seen. The incense was burnt on fire taken from the altar; its ingredients were selected by God Himself, and the command to beat them small reminds us of the words:—"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him."

Standing *thus* before God, the priest was to sprinkle the blood with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward, and before the mercy-seat, seven times. In these circumstances he learns in the holy place the value of that by which he stood there. The seven times marks its perfectness. The place where God stood was first cleansed, and then the place before Him where the worshipper was. For there was uncleanness in the very presence of God, even upon His mercy-seat, because of the one admitted there. While the blood was thus sprinkled beneath, the cloud was hiding or softening the manifestation of God, and the cloud of incense brought in by the priest was mingling with it above the mercy-seat. Thus in the holiest place the priest was to learn for himself the wondrous privilege of communion with God through the blood of the Lord Jesus. See 1 John i. 7.

Then he is to kill the people's sin offering, and do with it as he had done with that which was for himself. To

know for others the value of that which he had just been learning for himself.

The necessity for this atonement is said to be "the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and their transgression in all their sins." Then atonement was to be made for the tabernacle of the congregation, because it remained among the Israelites in the midst of their uncleanness. And thus it is that uncleanness does not debar us from the presence of God. It is as sinners that we have the privilege of access to Him by the means of the cleansing blood.

VER. 17. There was to be no man in the tabernacle while this was going on, until it was completed, and a full atonement had been made *for all*.

This tells us of our actual present circumstances. We are in the body waiting without, while our great Priest is doing the work within. But by faith we, too, may stand in Him within the veil; yet the experience can only be personal and individual, even though it be connected with service and the means of communion with each other. Compare 1 John i. 7. It is the personal experience and enjoyment of that high and blessed privilege which we know *to be in the power* of all by virtue of the blood. And *our enjoyment* of it is inseparably connected with the service of bringing others into the like experience, into the service of priests, and that in the highest character of priesthood. But we can only do this as sons, that is, as being in Christ, and so dwelling in the heavenlies which are the place of the blessing. For as being one with Him we are already in the holiest.

VER. 18. Having thus cleansed the holy place and the tabernacle of the congregation, the priest is next

directed "to make atonement for the altar that is before the Lord," that is, the altar of burnt offering in the court of the tabernacle. The same means are to be used, viz., the blood of the sin offerings which he had offered for himself and his house, and for the people.

But the order of these cleansings is important. The blood must first be presented before God in the holiest. Our separation by sin was from God, and to Himself, and into unfailing and abiding communion, He would bring us back. Accordingly, from the holy place of the Presence must flow forth all the blessing, without which the cleansing of other things would be of little value. And it was there that the blood was presented before God, and accepted by Him for atonement. And so the Lord Jesus suffered on the earth, and then entered at once with His own blood into the holiest, after which the heavens were opened to the Church, service done upon earth was accepted, and spiritual access into the holiest for worship was permitted. And although all this is at present cognisable only by faith, since Jesus is yet personally in the holy place, yet the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and the fact of His abiding with the Church on earth, but at the same time leading her into the inner communion of the sanctuary in heaven, is proof that the work is done. We thus discern the blood upon and before the mercy-seat.

But in the actual course the cleansing takes the order here appointed. First, it is applied to the holiest, where the Lord is after having borne and put away sin; next, to the heavenlies, into which He will receive His ascending Church; and lastly, to the earthly places where He will meet His earthly people, when they are brought to know the value of His blood—the blood of

the everlasting covenant on which their sure blessing depends.

The blood was to be put upon the horns of the altar round about, upon the highest point, that those who came within view might there see that which had been carried into the holy place, and carried thither by one who, though sinful, had by virtue of the blood been in the very holiest with God, and yet lived. The altar was also to be sprinkled seven times, to hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and to show them how they, though themselves unclean, might nevertheless come and worship there. All this is the consequence of the presentation of the blood of the sin offering before God, which reveals in its results the "one offering by which He hath *perfected* for ever them that are sanctified."

VER. 20. The next thing directed to be done in course is the confession of sin upon the live goat, and the sending him away by "a man of opportunity" into the wilderness. This is a manifestation of sin put away, which we have in the knowledge of Him Who was dead and is alive again, and which Israel shall have when they shall "look on Him Whom they have pierced, and mourn;" for then shall "a fountain be opened for the house of David for sin and uncleanness."

It is Aaron who takes the place of the confessor of sin on behalf of all the people, and who confesses "*all* their iniquities and *all* their transgressions in *all* their sins." And thus he is also the fit man, and the only one, to bear them away for ever, and, in the manifestation of his own life, to show that they were left where he bore them, in a land of separation, a land not inhabited, in the grave, whence they shall never more rise up before God to our condemnation.

VER. 23. So far this service is specially connected with the holy place, and with God ; and, therefore, Aaron continues to wear his linen garments. But now he is directed to go into the tabernacle and put them off, and leave them there.

By this act we see that, while in the immediate presence of God, we must have on the garments for glory and beauty, though priestly service calls us into circumstances in which they must be exchanged for ordinary apparel. It may also tell us of the forty days' manifestation of our Lord after His resurrection, during which He sent to His disciples the blessed words, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God," words which may here find their type in the offering of the burnt offering (ver. 24).

But the priest must first wash his flesh in water, and this act so often repeated, especially with respect to those who were engaged and came in contact with the sin offering, speaks again and again of the needed purity of resurrection, and the necessity of continually maintaining the knowledge and power of it.

Then the proof of acceptance, and the act of acceptable worship, follow in the burnt offering. During the whole of His life, the Lord Jesus was the acceptable One before God, and this was proved by His resurrection. But it is in our present circumstances, having put on our ordinary garments, that we have to offer this offering, that is, practically, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God (Rom. xii. 1). And to do this, we must come forth from the holiest into the sight of the congregation, bringing with us the blood and the incense.

VER. 25. The fat of the sin offering is to be burnt upon the altar ; we must acknowledge that all the

excellency is of God ; we have no part in the putting away of sin, though we are associated with Him Who has perfectly done it.

VER. 26. "He that let go the goat for the scape goat shall wash his clothes and bathe his flesh in water, and afterwards come into the camp." This, again, points out the defiling character of sin, whatever be the cause or mode of connection with it. We cannot even help others by imparting the knowledge of sin put away, unless we understand the defilement of it in our own case and its universal remedy, resurrection.

VER. 27. The carcasses of the animals of the sin offering are now to be burnt without the camp. And for him who performs this service washing is again commanded. It is not the priestly service of participation which is here indicated : the point is the completeness of the work of Christ, and our duty of maintaining and communicating the knowledge of it ("and this shall be a statute for ever unto you"). But, in going with Christ without the camp, we take the place of sinners. He went thither as bearing sin for others ; we go out as having sin, but bearing His reproach. All our knowledge of Him, and all our association with Him, is as sinners ; in no other character can we know anything of Him. For every higher character of priestly service requires a proportionate knowledge of sin—though, thanks be to God, of sin put away—for it involves proportionate knowledge of Him, and the value of His work, Who alone could be the propitiation for our sins.

VER. 29. We are here taught to maintain an unceasing remembrance of the great work of Christ by the command that the Day of Atonement should be kept every year at the appointed time, and in this command even

the "stranger" is remembered. The day was to be a Sabbath of rest, and yet a day of affliction and humiliation. For it is the remembrance of sin, in the place of sin, but at the same time a declaration that sin is put away. "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye *may be clean from all your sins* BEFORE THE LORD." Its continuance is enjoined in the successional priesthood, and the objects of the work are again distinctly stated, viz, to make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar; as also for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. It is an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BLOOD WHICH IS THE LIFE.

THE former chapter treated of the highest privilege of priesthood, and, accordingly, the address was through Moses to Aaron "his brother." Our attention is now directed to another important point, not one of special privilege, but a universal observance, the disregard of which would involve the being cut off from the people. It is, therefore, addressed through Moses to "Aaron, his sons, and all the children of Israel:" not to the "congregation" as a corporate body; but to the children of Israel individually.

The former chapter showed the result of the one perfect offering of Christ which brings us into the presence of God; and the necessity of a right and full understanding and remembrance of it. It is now made clear that nothing less than the perfect work of Christ has put away sin, and provided a way of escape from death and its wages. And in recognising this, no mere general acknowledgment, filled up with imaginations of our own, will avail. We must know altogether what Christ has effected, and believe with the heart God's testimony concerning His Son.

The general truth, that without shedding of blood there is no remission, has been ever in force since the fall. It was in acknowledging it that Abel by faith received the testimony of God, and by faith offered an acceptable

sacrifice. And many others followed his example in their several circumstances. But *faith* has ever respect to the testimony of God, and to the whole of it. The first declaration of God was short and in a sense ambiguous, not as to its end, but as to the means; yet faith took hold of it, for it was the word of the Lord. But when the testimony of God as to the means of His grace was more fully and explicitly unfolded, that was the guide to faith and the subject of it.

Now, in this chapter, the Lord refers to an evil into which the Israelites had formerly fallen through their careless ignorance and self-will. Their sacrifices had been offered to devils, and not to God; they had degenerated, through a mere nominal and formal observance of the command of God, to direct disobedience. Their sacrifices were a lie, and belonged to him who was the liar from the beginning. God now reminds His people of the necessity of the exact observance of His ordinance, as involving the question of life and death.

The Lord had already appointed the tabernacle as the definite and only habitation of His presence, and the door of the tabernacle as the place where He would meet with the children of Israel, and would accept their offerings, whether of free will or of positive command, provided they were offered according to His own directions.

But when these directions had been clearly and distinctly made known, God would not allow the desired result, unless strict attention were paid to them. If, for instance, sin were to be forgiven, it could not be by slaying an animal according to the mere self will of the offerer, when or where or how he pleased, even though he should choose to call it a sin offering. The general acknowledgment of the necessity of the shedding of

blood, unless it were coupled with regard to God's appointments and declared will concerning it, would be no atonement at all. The animal, the mode, and the place, of God's sin offering had been explicitly dictated, and that which was contrary to His law would not merely be unacceptable, but would even entail judgment on the offerer; nay it might prove to be an offering to devils rather than to God; for the least departure from His ordinance is a commencement of the evil which develops into avowed idolatry.

VER. 3. This commandment belongs more especially to the "house of Israel;" but "the stranger," who is afterwards mentioned (ver. 8), is equally involved in the obligation to obey. The offering *must* be brought to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and unless this were done, the blood, instead of making atonement, would cry out for vengeance. The one finished and perfect sacrifice of Christ brings any who really believe on His name to God. It doubtless should also bring believers into the fellowship of the Church, but if that were its only result, it would fail in its end, it would have produced a mere form of godliness, and would practically deny that power which separates from the world and from evil, which delivers from death, and brings us to life and to God. The mere profession, whatever the understanding and amount of theological knowledge may be, only seals condemnation, unless a man be really brought to God. There is no middle place, the gospel is either a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. He that believeth is saved; he that believeth not is condemned. Christ died for our sins, not to bring us to a mere profession of His name, or to a speculative knowledge of the necessity or value of atonement, but to bring

us to God. The blood is either before God as an offering for sin, or it is imputed to those who disregard it: and the offerer's nominal position, his being of Israel, or the fact of his offering in the camp, will be no protection;—"That man shall be cut off from among his people."

VER. 5. Not only is the necessity for sacrifice now made known, but God has also appointed the priest who must offer it, and the sole place of priestly service is the tabernacle. No longer can the offering be made in the open field, but in a definite spot. "The field is the world," but God's people are no longer left in the world and in the uncertainty of an isolated condition, but are brought together in separateness from the world to God. The place of priestly service is the heavens where God is, where only the sin offering can be offered (Heb. viii. 4). Christ is *the* Priest, to offer the sacrifice which He Himself has provided.

The offering here mentioned is a peace offering, for peace is ever the result of the true sacrifice unto God.

VER. 6. The blood must be sprinkled upon the altar, and the fat burned for a sweet savour. For when sprinkled upon the altar the blood is seen to have been accepted by God, and signifies the finished work of Christ; while the burning of the fat for a sweet savour shows that the excellency belongs entirely to God.

VER. 7. This verse is an emphatic statement that any departure from God's ordinance is nothing less than a sacrificing to devils, and thus even the full revealed light of the Gospel is no security, apart from the obedience of faith. Nay, the very gospel itself may thus be turned into an instrument of evil, and though the profession be that of the name of Christ, Satan may be the god who

is actually served. (See 2 Tim.; 2 Peter; and the Epistle of Jude.)

"This shall be a statute for ever throughout their generations," a point to be carefully observed.

VER. 8. The caution is repeated with the introduction of the "strangers;" and the offering now mentioned is the burnt offering, that is, acceptance and worship. This also must be brought to the door of the tabernacle, for the knowledge of acceptance and the privilege of worship is the knowledge of being brought nigh to God, or it is fallacious, an empty profession without a reality. So in the Epistle to the Ephesians (ii. 12, 13, 19), we are said to be no more strangers, because we have been "made nigh."

VER. 10. A command follows prohibiting the eating of blood. For eating blood is appropriating to ourselves, as belonging of right to us, that which has been forfeited to God by sin—"the life." God has given it, as here stated, to make atonement for the soul; that is, He has in His own way restored the lost life; but it is only *upon the altar* that He has given the blood to be an atonement. It is the blood of Christ, as presented to Him and recognised by Him, which is life, and so the Lord Jesus says: "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you." We must receive the life from God as given in the person of Him Who is the resurrection and the life. We must thus receive it, and not dream that we still have it in ourselves, or be deceived by indefinite ungrounded hope, which is but listening to the first lie of the enemy, "Ye shall not surely die." Much is here said upon this subject; and surely there is no greater barrier to our seeking from God, or rather receiving from God, our forfeited life than

the widely spread delusion that we still have it, or can procure it for ourselves. It is only as convicted sinners, as those who know that they have earned the sad wages of sin, that we shall value or receive the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. To disregard this is the presumption of eating blood, and God here says: "*I will even set My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.*"

VER. 13. The remembrance of our dependence upon God for life is always to be maintained. We are never to forget that we have and hold our forfeited lives from Him. Our life is hid at present with Christ in God, to be manifested when He appears in glory; therefore whatever we do we should do *eis δόξαν Θεοῦ*, as connected with His glory. The blood must be poured out and covered with dust; a striking acknowledgment of our condition—the blood poured out as the life forfeited to God, and covered with dust, the perishing nature of our corrupt flesh. See Ezek. xxiv. 7-9, where Jerusalem is called the *bloody* city, because she disobeyed the spirit of this precept.

VER. 15. But while we must ever maintain the sense of our dependence upon God for our greatest need, we must also be mindful that in depending on Him we are brought into life and nearness to Him, and have become His children, the children of light and life, who must therefore renounce all fellowship with death and darkness. But if we are brought into contact with the latter in the necessities of our present condition, we must maintain our purity in the power of resurrection, in the washing of the cleansing water. "*This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded.*"

M

CHAPTER XVIII.

PURITY IN MARRIAGE RELATIONS.

THE directions in this chapter are addressed to "the children of Israel." Moses is commanded first to say unto them, "I am the Lord your God," thus reminding them of the authority of Him Who addressed them, and of His claim to their submission and obedience. God was revealed to them as their God when He came to deliver them from Egypt, as the God Who had made a covenant with their fathers. They had been brought into the wilderness to learn their privilege experimentally, and at the same time to be taught that God is a jealous God, that they must be entirely His, and know that He Himself is sufficient for all things. In the wilderness they had learnt concerning the tabernacle of His presence and the atoning sacrifices that were to be presented at the door, as well as the further value of the blood, of which even in Egypt they had experienced the saving power. They had beheld the consecration of the priesthood which was to stand between them and God, and had received a discerning power to distinguish things clean and unclean. They had been shown a way by which their high priest might obtain access on their behalf into the holiest of all; and had lastly been reminded that God's sacrifices must be offered in the place and manner which He had directed. In the present chapter, the Lord, upon the ground of His relationship to them, gives them injunctions respecting

their own "*doings*," especially with regard to the evil and temptation to which they would shortly be exposed, but which they were to avoid as a people who knew the Lord to be their God. For the great safeguard against evil, and power of obedience, is ever the remembrance of what God is, and that He is our God. There is thus no room for uncertain reasonings as to the abstract fitness or propriety of things; but the declared mind of God is the standard of what is right or wrong for His own people. Now the great and avowed object of God with respect to those whom He has called is to purify them unto Himself to be a peculiar people. If there were any other standard of excellence than God Himself, which there is not, it would not be theirs to regard it. They are to be conformed to *His* image, to show forth *His* praises, to be perfect as *He* is perfect. And this must be manifested in their *doings*. He had brought them forth out of Egypt to be *His* people: they were not to be guided in their actions by what was done in the land of bondage. He was also leading them into Caanan to be His people *there*: they must not, therefore, imitate the doings of those who should be cast out before them. What they had to remember, to act upon, and to exemplify, in all circumstances and at all times, was that they were the people of God, that they had avouched the Lord to be their God, or rather, that God had made them to be His people. Therefore, before any details are given as to the things they were to do and to avoid, they are directed generally *not* to do as the Egyptians and Canaanites did, but to obey the ordinances of the Lord. Thus the whole contrariety between the two is involved in this command.

The evils which they are then taught in detail to avoid are chiefly of one characteristic class. But they involve

contrariety and disobedience to God, and so we find the prohibition, "Ye shall not do," followed by the words "I am the Lord." And further, there is something manifestly evil in the things themselves which are forbidden ; so that we find the declarations, "It is wickedness ;" "it is abomination ;" "it is confusion." These were the things for which the judgment of God fell upon the Canaanites, and for which the land spued them out—things equally contrary to all that in the works of nature might be known of God, and to the dictates of nature itself. The course by which they arrived at such a fearful climax of evil, and the judgment entailed thereby, are distinctly given in the first chapter of Romans.

Their contrariety to God is shown by their departure from all that He had declared of Himself in the works of creation, and shows the fearful tendency of the corrupted nature of man to depart in everything farther and farther from his Creator.

But in reference to His own ordinances the Lord says,—"Which if a man do he shall live in them." The Apostle Paul, after quoting this word in Rom x. 5-11, puts the righteousness of faith in the place of it. But the great deliverance out of Egypt had already set forth *that* truth to those who had "eyes to see or ears to hear." And to those who understood, the commandment was not only for the avoidance of evil, but also for the highest good ; for in the very next chapter it evolves that which the Lord Jesus declared to be the fulfilment of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (xix. 18). At present, however, the subject is the avoidance of those evils which are here presented in their revolting character. We do not need experience to confirm the word of our God, yet He graciously gives it, and we may easily

find out by observation the truth of the saying, "All that is of the world is not of the Father." The evils here portrayed are those of the world, the course of corrupt human nature, when the hand of restraint is removed (Rom. i.). But great and fearful as they are, it is needful that the people of God should be warned against them; and they are here exhibited in their most revolting climax, in order that Israel may avoid conformity to them in any the least respect. But the great motto, which stands in letters of light at the head of God's charge to His people, is, "I am the Lord, the Lord your God." "Walk before Me," said the Lord to His chosen servant and His friend, "and be thou perfect:" and He who was the perfect One replies by the Spirit in David, "I have set the Lord always before me I shall not be moved" (Ps. xvi. 8).

We have to watch against sin in its first approaches. It is always the same in its character; and in its results breaks down every barrier between right and wrong, good and evil; it is "wickedness," "abomination," "confusion." "And the land is defiled, therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants." The wages of sin is death, a just consequence which the righteous judgment of God confirms.

CHAPTER XIX.

EVERY-DAY DUTIES.

THE address is to "all the congregation of the children of Israel." Their attention is required to what is spoken, both individually and collectively. The introductory command is, "Ye shall be holy ; for I the Lord your God am holy." And throughout the chapter, the often repeated declaration, "I am the Lord," "I am the Lord your God," characterises the instruction given. For the Lord here speaks of the work of sanctification carried on practically, with respect to the doings of the people, in observing all the statutes and judgments of the Lord, and in avoiding everything done by the nations that were to be cast out as contrary thereto (chap. xx. 22, 23). It is generally to be observed, that, while the law was for nature, it also teaches of spiritual things and church circumstances (1 Cor. x., and Heb. pass.).

VER. 3. Regard to the authority of parents is regard to the authority of God in the person of those to whom He has delegated it, and is thus a constant means of testing men's recognition of God. This is "the first commandment with promise" (Eph. vi. 2), and entails blessing by inducing and confirming a habit of subjection and obedience. God gave His commands to parents, and obedience through all succession would, if faithfully observed, lead up to God. And if, as a consequence of discipleship, these relationships should for the truth's

sake be broken, they are commanded to be taken up again "in the Lord," in all their force. Compare Luke xii. 51-53 and Eph. vi. 1.

This command is connected with a general and more direct recognition of God in His ordinance of the Sabbath. The connection gives a principle like that in John iv. 20. The Lord says (Exod. xxxi. 13, 17), "It is a sign between Me and you . . . that ye may know that I am the Lord That doth sanctify you. . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth," &c. Comp. Ezek. xx. 12-20. In Ezek. xlv. 24, it is the part of the priests to hallow the Sabbaths. Comp. Ezek. xxii. 26. In Heb. iv. 3, it is said, "We which have believed do enter into rest;" and yet, "there remaineth a rest." But "he that hath entered into his rest," he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His;" and he now works the work of God, the Father, which is to "believe on Him Whom He hath sent." Thus we see *how* the Sabbath is to be cautiously observed as a sign and memorial that "it is the Lord that sanctifieth." As God He has finished His works, as the Father and the Son He is working still; for He is completing the new creation.

VER. 4. A warning against the evil which results from disregard to the statutes of the Lord, for He is God, and must so be regarded in obedience. Every turning from Him is a turning to idols; yet the offender may not at first be conscious of this. When the golden calf was set up, the proclamation was, "To-morrow is a feast to the Lord." To fulfil our own desires, rather than the commandments of the Lord, is in principle a "*making to yourselves* molten gods."

VER. 5. For producing the enjoyment of peace, our obedience and service must be free and unconstrained.

But it is a present matter ; it is an abominable thing not to be at peace with God, and an indication either of something wrong in our apprehension of His character, or of our disobedience. Thus much is repeated here concerning the peace offering, because it is connected with the point in question—"ye shall be holy." Wherever the obedience of love is found, there peace will also abide.

VER. 9. But, in the enjoyment of the abundance which God gives, regard must be had to the poor and the stranger, and that both in the harvest and the vintage ; for we must remember that those who possess less than we do have nevertheless equal needs. Upon this principle will God deal in His great harvest and vintage (Isa. xxiv. 13).

VER. 11. So Paul speaks of the necessity of avoiding these prevailing evils of nature, "seeing ye have put off the old man" (Eph. iv. ; Col. iii.). For the full blessing which is given to us removes all occasion for these things. In Matt. v. 34, the Lord says, "Swear not at all." The knowledge of what we are in ourselves will lead us to be careful in thus profaning the name of the Lord, and to be content with yea and nay, or, "if the Lord will." "For whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

VER. 13-18. Various details of good to be done, and evil to be avoided, closing with the precept which marks the spirit of the whole, and which the Lord says is the fulfilling of the law.

VER. 19. The fitness and propriety of things is to be regarded. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," says the apostle.

"Evil communications corrupt good manners ;" the result of all evil associations is evil. "And again, the

apostle says, "Doth God take care for oxen? . . . for our sakes, no doubt, this is written."

The "seed" is the word, and that only is to be sown in the field, which is the world. In a similar precept (Deut. xxii. 9), it is added, "lest the fruit of thy vineyard be defiled." Compare 1 Cor. ii. 1.

The linen is the material of the holy priestly garments, and believers are to make no compromise of their profession in the world. Woollen garments may be worn when away from the holy place; but the materials are not to be mixed.

VER. 20. The corruption of the Church is here symbolised. Under the circumstances it is not to be followed by exterminating but chastising judgments, and is to be forgiven, when the trespass offering has been presented. Perhaps there is a hint at the condition of the Jews.

VER. 23. The present is not the time of eating fruit, but of planting and waiting: for what is planted is described as "all manner of trees," and first their fruit must be made "holy to praise the Lord withal." There will be service and waiting until the whole work is completed. When the last enemy is destroyed, then will come unhindered enjoyment.

VER. 26. The injunction as to eating blood is here repeated together with a caution against enchantments, &c. There must be no seeking to obtain any knowledge, or to accomplish any end, apart from God. No appearance is to be made of sorrowing for the dead, as if we were without hope. For God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. His people have passed from death unto life. 1 Thess. iv.

VER. 29. The least approach to association with the

evil of the world is to be avoided, as opening the door to the full consummation of evil. God's Sabbaths are to be kept—the sign of His sanctification; and His sanctuary is to be revered. “Whoso defileth the temple of God, him will God destroy.”

VER. 31. The Lord has not left us to the need of seeking for knowledge from any other source than Himself; for He has made known all things to us. By the assured conviction that this is the case, the evil here mentioned is to be avoided. Only by the Holy Spirit can we receive knowledge: for the Spirit searcheth “all things, yea, the deep things of God.”

VER. 32. We regard God in rendering honour to whom honour is due, and fear to whom fear (1 Pet. ii. 17).

VER. 33. The stranger (“for ye were strangers”) is to be loved, like the neighbour, “as thyself.” The Lord answered the question, “Who is my neighbour,” by the parable of the *Samaritan*.

VER. 35. In all respects, in the minutest circumstances, the remembrance that they were the people of God, should lead the Israelites to an exact uprightness and circumspection in their conduct. They should observe all His statutes, and do them.

CHAPTER XX.

WARNINGS AGAINST THE SINS OF THE WORLD.

THE Lord directs Moses *again* to speak unto the children of Israel. In this chapter many of the former injunctions are repeated, with the additional declarations that disregard to them would be followed by judgment. The proper *motive* was first presented with the commandment; and, if that were not regarded, the fact of their having known the mighty deliverance of the Lord would not shelter them while disregarding His ordinances. His object was to separate them from the nations whom He was about to judge for these very evils, to teach them as His own holy people His will, and to enable them to distinguish between clean and unclean. If, therefore, they fell into the evil manners of the nations from whom God had separated them, they must be judged and punished. "He that saith I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John ii. 4).

CHAPTER XXI.

LAWS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE PRIESTS.

WE have in this chapter a further ordinance of practical sanctification, but specially for "the priests, the sons of Aaron." The same motive is again repeated, "I the Lord, Which sanctify you, am holy." In the case of one of the ordinary priests, who enter only into the holy place, a measure of defilement for the dead is permitted, "for his kin that are near unto him." The nearer we are to God the greater measure of holiness is involved and required. The high priest had access to the holiest, to the immediate presence of God; therefore, in his case nature might not at all intrude. But in the case of the priests generally, natural feelings were not entirely subordinated; for they can only be so when we know experimentally that the way into the holiest of all is made manifest through the vail, the flesh of Jesus, and have learnt there the knowledge, the portion of sons, that as He is, so are we. This is shown in the case of the High Priest. It is in the person of Jesus alone that life and immortality are brought to light: in Him we are brought nigh to God, counting ourselves to be dead and alive again in Him.

But even a lower measure of understanding required a scrupulous observance of the ordinances enjoined. The priests were not to defile themselves by any outward mark or sign of this mourning for the dead. They should

at least mourn as those who have hope, and that, too, a hope full of immortality. For their duty was to offer the sacrifices to the Lord made by fire, which marked His satisfaction and acceptance, and were a sufficient indication that death was no longer threatening. For death separates from God, since it testifies to the existence of sin which is hateful to Him. Neither can the office of the priest admit of connection with the harlotry of worldliness; for he is holy unto his God. His daughter, too, is cautioned against this as entailing judgment upon herself.

But the high priest is not permitted any measure of defilement: for he represents the perfection of sonship, as revealed in the person of Christ.

Further, none that have any blemish may approach, either to the altar, or to the vail, to offer the offering; though they may eat of the bread of their God, "both of the most holy, and of the holy."

God looks upon all who are brought nigh to Him as perfect, entirely perfect, in Christ, and it is in the apprehension of this fact that we practically draw nigh in the exercise of the priestly office. While we regard ourselves as in the blemishes of nature, we cannot do this. We may and shall get our needs supplied; for none other than the holy things may we eat. But the full privilege of *service and worship* we cannot have.

CHAPTER XXII.

LAWS RESPECTING HOLY THINGS.

VER. 1-16. This chapter, addressed to "Aaron and his sons," relates to their connection with "the holy things which the children of Israel hallow unto the Lord. No man who was a leper, or had a running issue, or was unclean, might go unto the holy things, or eat them. If he did, this would be profaning the holy name of the Lord, and that soul should be cut off from His presence. Perfection is in question in the former chapter, and purity in this. In neither is it a case simply of personal salvation that is provided for, but of access to God and His sanctuary in the exercise of priestly service. In the former instance the blemished person might *eat* the bread of God, though he had a sense of remaining imperfection; but in this case the unclean may neither eat of nor touch the hallowed thing, while a consciousness of impurity or defilement remains. They must know that the day of impurity is passed, and its sun gone down, and that they are experiencing the cleansing power of resurrection life. The priest had been before commissioned to declare to the children of Israel the remedies for their pollutions; but he must know himself to be perfectly free from the taint of them, before he could render, on behalf of others, the service connected with his office. He must know that in all these holy things, God, His name, and His sanctuary, were concerned, and therefore that impurity

would be punished by cutting off. "It is his food," it is his duty, his privilege, his service, to partake of them; but he must do so in perfect purity. Nor can there be any evasion of this condition; for the impurity mentioned is of either personal or contracted defilement.

He must also abstain from partaking of that which "died of itself," or "was torn" (of beasts). The priest *has to do with death* in all the offerings; but they are appointed of God, and show forth the death of Christ, which has abolished death, a truth which he must not fail to remember.

No stranger may eat of the holy thing. A stranger is specially admitted to privilege (the grace of God to sinners); but he must be no longer a stranger who is admitted to this holy service; he must know that he is brought nigh. The same law applies to a "sojourner of the priest," and "a hired servant;" but one whom the priest "has bought with money" may eat of his meat, and so also may one born in his house.

The priest's daughter married to a stranger is forbidden; but if she be a widow or divorced, and have no child, and so return to her father's house as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's bread. Worldliness is an effectual barrier to the communion of these holy privileges; but there is room for restoration.

Any transgression, though it be done unwittingly, of these laws involves loss; for a fifth part is to be added, and the holy thing restored.

VER. 17-25. These instructions are addressed "to Aaron and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel;" but they are concerned also with the "strangers in Israel." We have now set before us the required perfection and purity in the sacrifice, as before in the priesthood.

For a burnt offering a man must offer, at his own will, "a male without blemish." A sacrifice of peace offerings, to accomplish a vow or a free will offering, must be perfect, or it will not be accepted. Full access in worship and perfect peace are only consistent with a perfect sacrifice, that is, a complete understanding of the perfection of Christ.

In these offerings, then, there must be neither imperfection nor impurity. But an exception is made in respect of a free-will offering which is not votive. In this case an animal that has anything superfluous or lacking may be offered, but not for a vow, which would make the sacrifice a matter of requirement. Yet for the peace of one who has an imperfect understanding God will accept a peace offering though imperfect, provided that it be an unencumbered free-will offering.

Generally, nothing that is bruised, or broken, or cut, or crushed, shall be used for sacrifice in the land. Nor can an offering be accepted from a stranger's hand of anything imperfect. A stranger's offering *is* accepted, but it must be unblemished. And of the unfit animals it is said: "Because their corruption is in them, and blemishes be in them, they shall not be accepted for you."

VER. 26. These ordinances are concluded by a direction given "to Moses," without reference "to Aaron, his sons, or the children of Israel." It refers to the time when the animals appointed for the sacrifices should "be accepted," or (as in Exod. xxii. 30) "given to the Lord." By God's direction this was to be "on the eighth day and thenceforth," then and afterwards, but not before. God does not interfere in nature, nor does He accept it; but He teaches us to look forward to the time

when, in the manifestation of the new creation in resurrection, all shall be His.

VER. 28. Probably this verse may hint that the ordinances of God do not interfere with His laws in nature. And perhaps it may tell us, too, of the order in death, and acceptance in offering, of Christ and His Church. When He has overcome death by dying, and has risen again, *then* His Church in Him dies and lives.

VER. 29. But a thanksgiving offering is a question of to-day. To-day we have peace, and the thanksgiving, if not offered to-day, will not be accepted (Heb. xiii. 15 ; Ps. cvii. 22). The conclusion of the whole matter is that Israel must keep the commandments of the Lord, and not profane His name, but hallow Him Who hallowed them, and brought them out of the land of Egypt.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD.

THIS chapter is addressed to the children of Israel, "concerning the feasts of the Lord" which were to be proclaimed as "holy convocations."

The feasts are seven in number as follows:—

I. "*The Sabbath*," every seventh day.

II. "*The passover*," on the fourteenth day of the first month at even.

III. The feast of "*Unleavened Bread*," on the fifteenth day of the same month, and continuing seven days.

IV. The feast of the "*First-fruits*," at the commencement of harvest, on the morrow after the Sabbath.

V. The "*Blowing of trumpets*," on the first day of the seventh month.

VI. The "*Day of Atonement*," on the tenth day of the seventh month.

VII. The Feast of "*Tabernacles*," on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, and continuing seven days.

Three of these feasts are distinguished by the required attendance of all the "men children" to appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel."

"Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which He shall choose; in the feast of *unleavened bread*, and in the *feast of weeks*, and in the *feast of tabernacles*; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty: every man shall give

as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God, which He hath given thee." Deut. xvi. 16. See also Exod. xxiii. 14; xxxiv. 23.

The general characteristic of these feasts is that they are "feasts of the Lord," "holy convocations." But in feasts continued during several days, the *first, seventh, and eighth days*, are specially distinguished as "holy convocations," in which "no servile work is to be done." In each of these appointed seasons the people were to be occupied in matters which separated them from their common avocations, and which referred directly to the Lord. All is to be done "unto the Lord," or, "before the Lord," whether it be presenting offerings, ceasing from servile work, or from work absolutely, or afflicting their souls.

Frequent reference is made to these feasts in other parts of Scripture, and many further particulars are mentioned. In this chapter the immediate object seems to be to give their order, and to present them in their right place in the course of instruction given in the book, which is a practical code of guidance for the holy people of the Lord, to enable them to keep the Lord prominently before them, and to make the symbols of His grace understood by those who had "a heart to perceive, eyes to see, and ears to hear" (Deut xxix. 4).

As connected with the course of time, the full revolution of the year divided into its due portions, we may expect to find in these feasts symbolic indices of God's dealings in their historical order. Perhaps, indeed, the whole revolution of time, in its dispensational course, is included.

I. The Sabbath is the first mentioned of the feasts, and comes under the general heading of all as "holy convoca-

tions." This is a constantly recurring feast spread over the whole of the year, a weekly memorial. But with respect to the others there is a direction that they shall be proclaimed "*in their seasons.*"

The alternation of six days' labour and a holy rest unto the Lord on the seventh day characterised the whole revolving period, irrespective of other appointments for days of rest, restraint, &c., though some of these might fall upon the Sabbath, in which case the day would be characterised by the more special annual solemnity. But though a holy convocation, the Sabbath did not bring the whole congregation together, but was to be observed "*in all their dwellings.*" And it was a positive rest, 'ye shall do no work' (See Exod. xx. ; Deut. v.): this is the special point enforced.

• It was a memorial of God's rest from His works in creation (Gen. ii. 3 ; Exod. xx. 11).

"And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day" (Deut. v. 15).

"Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord That doth sanctify you" (Exod. xxxi. 13 ; Ezek. xx. 12).

"And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God" (Ezek. xx. 20).

In the wilderness a double portion of manna was sent as a provision for the Sabbath (Exod. xvi. 22). This is the first mention of it subsequently to the notice of its sanctification when the works of creation were finished.

The shewbread was to be set in order before the Lord every Sabbath continually (Lev. xxiv. 8; 1 Chron. ix. 32).

A continual burnt offering of two lambs, with their meat and drink offerings, was appointed for the Sabbath (Numb. xxviii. 9).

It was to be esteemed "a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable" (Isa. lviii. 15). In the new heavens and earth it is an appointed period for all flesh to come to worship (Isa. lxvi. 23). And when Messiah shall have built the Millennial temple, it is an appointed time for the east gate, by which the prince enters, to be opened (Exod. xlvi. 1).

In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day, the women came to the sepulchre of the Lord (Matt. xxviii. 1).

In Isaiah i. 13, the Lord says of the Sabbaths that He cannot away with them; for the people *had forsaken Him* (ver. 4). But the keeping of the Sabbath is subsequently commanded.

Generally, blessings are promised to observance and judgment is a consequence of disregarding it (Jer. xvii. 21; Neh. xiii. 15).

The Lord Jesus, in the course of His ministry, evidently sets aside *this* Sabbath, and presents Himself as the Son of man, the Lord of the Sabbath, with the statement, "My Father worketh *hitherto* and I work." But He Himself is the Sabbath, the substance of which the day was the shadow (Col. ii. 16, 17).

In Hebrews iv. the whole question is taken up, showing that the institution of the seventh day pointed forward to the real Sabbath. We that believe do enter into rest; but *the* Sabbath yet remains. And so it was

that the sabbaths of days expanding into sabbaths of weeks and months and years, and thenceforward into sabbaths of sabbaths, led the eye of faith to look onward to the true Sabbath of God. All tended to show that God was yet working, though the works first spoken of were finished.

But "he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest." This is a key for the Church to the true moral force of the repeated injunctions in the Old Testament as to the Sabbath. They call upon us to cease from the works of the old creation and to labour in those of the new. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature" (*καὶνὴ κτίσις*). And thus the injunctions for the observance of this ever recurring feast throughout the whole course of time comes in its force to us who ought to have rest in believing, that is, in seeing God's rest, and in labouring to enter into it. And this labour is a struggling against "disobedience" (Heb. iv. 11, marg., which is the correct rendering of *ἀπειθείας*). All the scriptures quoted above will concur in this. But there is no Sabbath where God is forgotten.

Sabbaths are afterwards mentioned which are connected with special times and circumstances in the course of the feasts, both seventh, eighth, and first days: but this is the seventh day rest, and to be ever observed throughout the whole year. The eighth day and the first day are manifestation, but both are now, as the seventh, true to *faith*; and so all are named. For faith takes hold of God, and He has revealed His *purpose*, the mystery hidden from ages and generations.

But it must also be known, in all that relates to this

point, that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." *God* provides a rest for *man*. And Jesus, the Son of man, is Lord of the Sabbath, and presents Himself as the rest of the weary (Matt. xi. 28). And in this instance we discern the two points of entering and labouring to enter; for both are accomplished by learning of Him.

Much of the Lord's works of love and grace was done on the Sabbath day, and the result of them will be seen on the Lord's day. And so in the knowledge of rest we are to be labouring, and meanwhile looking for the dawning towards the first day of the week. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works."

VER. 5. II. The Passover. This is the beginning of the appointment of the feasts "in their seasons." And the passover takes the first place, as it is said in the history of its institution;—"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month in the year to you" (Exod. xii. 2). God then gave Israel the blood of the lamb to be their safety when the last fearful judgment came, the destruction of the first-born. And so the Passover stands at the commencement of the festivals of the year, as the memorial of the great deliverance which introduced the people into all subsequent blessings and privileges. The blood was a *token unto them of what God did when He saw it*.

This was not a feast for the congregation assembled before the Lord. But every man was to take a lamb according to the house of his fathers, a lamb for a house. Provision was however made that all might partake and that none might be left out. And this tells us of the

sufficiency of Christ and His blood for His household, the Church. The details of this institution are variously set forth throughout Scripture, but belong more especially to the place of its origin in Exod. xii. Here it is mentioned as introducing us to that which followed in inseparable connection with it, and which was also the first time in the year when the whole congregation were to appear before the Lord, the feast of unleavened bread. So in 1 Cor. v. 7, 8, we read:—"Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, *therefore* let us keep the feast."

But it was instituted at the close of the second Sabbath in the year, "the fourteenth day of the first month at even:" *this is the point insisted upon* as introductory to the fifteenth which was the first day, that is, a resurrection day, and commenced a feast continuing through seven days, the next point being harvest in the land. The action of the Lord in Luke vi. 1 seems to have reference to this: "On the second sabbath after the first, He went through the corn-fields, and His disciples plucked the ears of corn."

VER. 6. III. The feast of Unleavened Bread. This was the first of the three feasts of the year in which every male of the congregation was required to appear before the Lord. On the first day there was an holy convocation, as also on the seventh. During the whole seven days unleavened bread was to be eaten, and a daily offering was made by fire unto the Lord. In Numb. xxviii., the particular offerings are specified; but here it is said generally "offerings made by fire," the point set forth being that acceptable sacrifices were offered to God during the whole time. No servile work was to be done; for the people were to stand before the Lord as those whom He

had freed from the service and bondage of Egypt. They were to be as "the Lord's freedmen" (1 Cor. vii. 22).

These circumstances in general mark the restraint put upon nature, as connected with and consequent upon the knowledge of deliverance. The immediate condition into which the Israelites were brought was in direct contrast to that of Egypt. The latter was the old leaven and the leaven of malice and wickedness, as contrasted with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. But the offerings made by fire were, during the whole season, a continual token of God's acceptance and approval. These were the seven days of nature, during which purity was to be maintained in restraining nature which had had its full course in Egypt, but with hard bondage.

Perhaps the holy convocations exhibit the circumstances of the Church at the commencement and close of her course, between the first knowledge of redemption and the waiting for its manifestation at the second coming of the Lord.

But the days of unleavened bread have a moral application to the whole period of the Church's sojourn here, and the next feast, to which it is introductory, is mentioned in connection *with the land*, though that, too, as being now revealed, is the present portion of *faith*.

VER. 10. IV. The feast of First Fruits. This feast has no exact date. It was at the commencement of harvest. When the harvest was ripe, and the sickle was put into the corn, then the first sheaf of corn was to be waved, and all that followed, in the course of the "weeks," took its commencement from that period (Deut. xvi. 9). But, though the time depended upon the ripening of the harvest, a certain day is specially mentioned, "the morrow after the Sabbath," that is, the first day of

the week, a resurrection day.* With the wave sheaf were to be offered, a burnt offering, a meat offering, and a drink offering of wine. Thus we have the type of the Lord Jesus the first fruits from the dead, and see Him also in the priest presenting this offering before God. And afterwards, but not before, does the partaking of the fruit of the land commence. The period of seven Sabbaths or fifty days then runs on, and on the morrow after the seventh Sabbath, another resurrection day, a new meat offering is presented, of two wave loaves baked with leaven. This is the pentecostal acceptance of the Church, and connected with it are a burnt offering with its meat and drink offerings, a *sin offering*, and a peace offering. These, it is said, shall be "holy unto the Lord *for the priest*." And on this day is a holy convocation. The burnt offering is, as ever, a sweet savour unto the Lord; but the sin offering and peace offering, with the wave loaves, are holy to the Lord for the priest. The two lambs of the peace offering are specially mentioned. Christ is our peace, and in Him *we* have peace.

The poor and the stranger are to be remembered in this harvest time, and the corners of the field are to be left unreaped for them, together with the gleanings of the harvest.

The parable of the tares refers to the period of harvest as a time, not only of deliverance, but also of preparation for judgment, and both points seem to be here set forth. But some, though only a few, are spared in the judgment and left. And therein is instruction for the Church in the grace of God. We have, then, in type the Church,

* But this day might arrive while the course of the seven days of unleavened bread was running on : for Abib was the month of "ears of corn."

while the harvest looks forward to the time of the end ; but regarding the long unmentioned interval between this and the seventh month, the feast of trumpets, the feast may refer chronologically to Israel, and the period of the Church be in the blank. Nevertheless, what has gone before is typical of that period.

The sheaf of first fruits is "to be accepted for you ;" the first fruits of wave loaves with leaven are "the first fruits unto the Lord." In this we see full acceptance, but there is the leaven of nature remaining, and therefore there must be the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the peace offering. But the wave loaves were not burnt ; it was in the sacrifice of Christ that the acceptance was known, and it was testified of by the descent of the Spirit upon all the disciples, so that "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii.). In these circumstances, and having being cautioned as to the harvest, we are left, during the long period of silence, until the seventh month, when the blowing of the trumpets awakens us to a new scene, and calls up Israel, and is a memorial to God. This feast of weeks was the second at which all the males were to appear before God.

VER. 24. V. The Feast of Trumpets. The Sabbath of days and weeks was accomplished, the closing of harvest time had been mentioned, an unnoticed interval had elapsed, the revolution of months had passed away, and the seventh, God's appointed season, had arrived. On the first day of this month there was a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. The only points here mentioned are, the blowing of the trumpets, the doing no servile work (it was a Sabbath), and an offering made by fire unto the Lord. This appears to be a preparatory feast to that which follows.

The blowing of trumpets seems in general to signify an awakening of attention (Num. x.), either to convey some intimation to the congregation, or as a memorial before God. It is here said generally to be a memorial, that is, probably, both to the Lord and the people. But it proceeds from the Lord, as being His appointment, and is introductory to the day of atonement, as the latter is to the feast of tabernacles. There are several remarkable correspondencies between these feasts and those at the commencement of the year.

SABBATH.

Tenth day of the month. }
 Lamb set apart. }
 Fifteenth day of the month. }
 Unleavened bread during }
 seven days.

BLOWING OF TRUMPETS.

Tenth day of the month. }
 Day of atonement. }
 Fifteenth day of the month. }
 Tabernacles during seven }
 days.

FIRST FRUITS.

The time of Harvest.

Thou shalt leave unto the }
 poor and the stranger.

The time of Ingathering.

{ The eighth day, that great }
 day of the feast.
 { Rivers of living water. (John }
 vii. 37, 38).

VER. 27. VI. Day of atonement. The special injunctions here given with regard to this day are—"Ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And ye shall do no work in that same day." This was the day on which the High Priest went into the holiest, and made atonement there, and in the holy place, and at the altar, and for the people, "that they might be clean from all their sins" (Lev. xvi.). But it is the position of the children of Israel as waiting outside, and not what was going on within, which is here set forth. They were to afflict their souls. And so in our

own case, the gospel trumpet has sounded, the whole mystery of God's grace has been declared, we know the work on which our great High Priest is engaged, and in the meantime, whilst waiting in expectation of His coming forth, we are to take up our cross, and thus in affliction of soul to confess *Him* before men. As soon as the revolving Sabbaths, according to the purpose and counsel of God, are accomplished, this day falls in with the great Jubilee, when the trumpet, loud of sound, shall re-echo through the heavens and the earth (Lev. xxv. 9). But the present is the season of waiting and humiliation on earth, in the knowledge of what has been done *there*, and what is now going on in heaven (John xiv. 3). This is preparatory to the quickly succeeding feast of tabernacles and ingathering, the third and last occasion in the course of these feasts in which the whole congregation were to present themselves before the Lord.

Ver. 34. VII. The feast of Tabernacles. This feast was to continue during the often mentioned period of seven days, but in this case alone there is an eighth day mentioned. It was connected with the year of release (Deut. xxxi. 10). The directions given in Numbers xxix. 13-38, for the sacrifices connected with this season, show that a stream of blood was continually flowing. The appointment of this feast is for those who were born Israelites, and the object here mentioned is, "that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." As the passover was the memorial of their deliverance, so was this of the circumstances into which they were brought, and which continued until they entered the land, after which came the celebration of the remembrance of them. To dwell in tents is ever the condition

of the faithful (Heb. xi. 9): but, as having the earnest of the inheritance, we in a sense can keep the feast as a memorial. But it actually continues during the seven days of nature, and on the eighth, the great day, begins the communication of blessing to others, the rivers of living water flowing out; and on that day the holy convocation is a solemn assembly, a day of restraint.

It is also connected with the ingathering of "the fruit of the land," and is a "rejoicing before the Lord."

It is said in general with respect to these feasts, that the offerings, &c., are to be offered, everything upon its day, though the days are not here particularised.

For the object of this chapter is to show the course and connection of the feasts through the period of revolving time. We may regard them in the main as a mystical history of God's people. We keep the feasts by being found in those circumstances which are according to the place and progress of what God in the Son, or in the Holy Ghost, is doing for us. If we regard as an anti-typical fulfilment the recorded history of the actual circumstances of the people of God in the Scriptures, it would be as follows:—

I. The Sabbath presents generally the rest in God—in Jesus, and through the Holy Ghost.

II. The Passover points to that time when the Lord and the twelve sat down together, and when He was slain as the Lamb.

III. The Feast of unleavened Bread is the time during which we must obey (1 Cor. v. 7, 8), be prepared to realise the Lord's declaration, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," and put our trust in His prayer that we should be kept from the evil.

IV. The Feast of First Fruits shows forth the resurrec-

tion of the Lord Jesus ; while the offerings connected with it signify the knowledge of atonement and acceptance.

When the Day of Pentecost was fully come, the two wave loaves were offered by the Holy Ghost sent down from the risen Jesus. And thus the Church was formed and accepted in the Beloved, in spite of her leaven. During the unnoticed period, the mystery is developed in the person of Saul, that the Gentiles may be fellow-heirs, the middle wall being broken down. The Jew, as such, in the meantime was broken off.

V. The Feast of Trumpets. The proclamation of the gospel of the grace of God by Paul, as revealing the Son in him the chief of sinners, and as triumphing over all man's evil, in the everlasting purpose of a God of love.

VI. The Day of Atonement. The effect of the gospel announced by the trumpets, not without a reference to the end, when the Jews shall look upon Him Whom they have pierced, and mourn.

VII. The Feast of Tabernacles. The Lord went up secretly to this, which was then called a feast of the Jews. But we have a sample in the Acts, in the deliverance of Peter from prison, of the hand of the Lord coming in the power of His own love to deliver His people. When He sees that their strength is gone, He will suddenly arise and bring about the full accomplishment of the feast of Tabernacles. Then, as shown by this "secret" action in John vii. 10, He Himself will be in their midst, and they, after believing on Him, will become the ministers of universal blessing. The Church, nevertheless, in a higher sense anticipates all this ; for though it may be rightly applied to the Jew in type, it also belongs, as does all Scripture, to the Church.

These things thus stand in historical order in the Scriptures :

I. The Jew cut off (Rom. xi ; xxviii. 25-28).

II. Acts xv. 14. " God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name."

III. " After this I will return again, and build the tabernacle of David that is fallen down," &c.

IV. " That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles," &c.

" Known unto God are all His works, from the beginning of the world."

" It is the Lord Who doeth all these things."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE LAMPS AND SHEW-BREAD—THE BLASPHEMER.

IN the last chapter we had a summary history of the circumstances into which the people of the Lord would come by His dealings with them in grace, from the first hour of their redemption through the precious blood of the Lamb, to the time of their full and everlasting deliverance when Jesus Himself shall be in their midst. The matters now to be expounded have been before mentioned, but have here a place historically, following other things from which they have resulted.

The children of Israel generally are addressed by the Lord through Moses; but this time by a "command," for we are now to consider things which must be done. They were to contribute certain things that were needed for the fulfilment of the design of God. The first was "pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually." When the Lord, in the gospel of Matthew, had unfolded the heavenly principles of the kingdom, He then addressed His disciples as "the light of the world." In regard to their manifestation as such in all the fulness of God's purpose, we find the following passage in the Psalms: "Once have I sworn by *My holiness*, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven"

(Ps. lxxxix. 35-37). But here we have to do with tabernacle circumstances and patterns of things in the heavens. Like the moon in the night, this light was to be burning "from evening till morning." It was the light of pure oil on the pure candlestick. The consideration of the particulars of these things is not necessary to the purpose of this passage. But in general the oil is the Holy Ghost, and the candlestick and lamps the Church in union with the Lord Jesus ; its members being made partakers of the divine nature, and thus becoming the light in the heavenly place, in the tabernacle of *testimony without the veil*. The intrinsic character of the Church thus symbolised is light, but it is light yielded *in service*. The Lord Jesus Himself is ever the light of the world, but the Church is here united and manifested with Him in life, and therefore reflects His glory. The Church failed in maintaining its character on earth as the light of the world, and failed, too, when outwardly divided into separate candlesticks.

But Jesus never fails ; and so, in result, in heaven the lamps are found to be united in one candlestick in Him, being caused to burn with the pure *beaten* oil, and so to shine for ever.

The next point in this chapter is the arrangement of the shewbread. This was made of fine flour, baked in twelve cakes (two tenth deals being used for each cake), which were to be set in two rows, six in a row, on the pure table before the Lord. Frankincense was to be put on each loaf for a memorial, an offering made by fire unto the Lord. The loaves were to be set in order every Sabbath, "being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant." These were to belong to Aaron and his sons, and to be eaten in the holy place.

The two wave loaves, the first fruits of the Church at Pentecost, show its acceptance, though it is as yet mixed up with the impurity of nature; but here the Church is seen in its perfectness in Christ, made of the fine flour without the leaven; while the frankincense testifies to its entire acceptance as a sweet savour unto the Lord. For the fine flour is the perfect nature of Christ, of which the Church partakes, as may be seen by this its permanent place of service and abode in the heavenlies. The frankincense shows it to be the food of God in memorial; but it is the portion of the priests to feed upon, and it is this feeding which gives the perfect identification with Christ (John vi. 56), and causes His priests to receive strength for service to God. The twelve loaves of two tenth deals are the complete assembly of the whole body of the redeemed; but the two rows mark a distinction, though all are in union upon the pure table, presented ever in Christ.

By this material of fine flour, the loaves testify the perfection of the nature in virtue of which they are placed within the tabernacle, just as the oil is the substance which exhibits light in service. The former is Christ, the latter is the Holy Ghost. Both are said to be from the children of Israel: for both were given to them of God. The latter is described as being "by an everlasting covenant," which refers us to God as the great source of all. The shewbread is literally "bread of the presence," that is, of God.

There is a connection between this ordinance and Matt. xii., which shows how the law taught of grace. The Lord refers to Hos. vi. 6, as unfolding the principle, "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the *knowledge of God* more than burnt offerings." In Matt. xi. and xii. He

had said of the kingdom of heaven, "the violent take it by force." He had declared that Himself alone could communicate the *true knowledge of God, that is, of the Father*: He had presented Himself as the rest of the weary, and the Lord of the Sabbath. And in the course of these things, He speaks of David who ate the shewbread which was "lawful" only for the priests to eat, and of the priests who in the temple break the Sabbath, which God had commanded not to be broken, and yet are "blameless." Then He tells the Pharisees, that, if they had understood Hos. vi. 6, they would not have condemned the guiltless; for, He adds, "the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." So does He manifest His own person as the key to every blessing, and show Himself to be the One Who brings contrite sinners into the highest privileges. All this is, as seen above, in connection with the everlasting covenant; and the disciples, in eating the ears of corn upon earth on the Sabbath day, were proving in principle their title to partake of the bread of heaven, and to be there. The kingdom of heaven was suffering violence. Thus we see that the result so far as shown in these two ordinances—viz., the Church for ever perfected in heaven, both in standing and in service—is not the effect of the law compelling the obedience of nature to the commands of God, but of God working in grace, bringing sinners near to Himself in Christ, and, when they are brought nigh, imparting that knowledge of Himself which comprises all blessing, and power, and qualification for service.

Just in the same way the feasts may be regarded as God's directory for the whole course of the Church from the world to heaven; failing, indeed, as a directory, to be observed, but showing in the result that there

is no failure, because all is based on the "*everlasting covenant*."

A parallelism may be traced between the course of these feasts and the course of the history of the Churches in Rev. ii. and iii. ; as also between the scene in this chapter, the candlestick and shewbread in the heavenly place, and the seven spirits and twenty-four crowned elders *before* the throne. The characteristics of Him Who addresses the Churches are to be compared with the characteristics of the feasts. In the addresses the failure is shown, as well as the blessing which accrues to faithfulness. And although the failure is total as regards the corporate Church upon earth, the result of the everlasting covenant is, nevertheless, seen in heaven.

VER. 10. The circumstances of these ordinances are remarkably contrasted with what immediately follows—the account of the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, striving together with a man of Israel in the camp, and of the blasphemy of the former against *The Name*, the sacred name of Jehovah. The blasphemer was kept in ward until the Lord's judgment could be known, and then it was commanded that those who heard him should lay their hands on him, and that all the congregation should stone him. With the sentence the general precept is given:—"Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and *all* the congregation shall certainly stone him ; as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land."

A few repeated injunctions follow, which show the strict and unbending character of the requirements of the law, as well for the stranger as for one born in the

country. And then the sentence is executed on the blasphemer.

We are left in no uncertainty as to the origin of the sin so solemnly punished. It arose from the conduct of an Israelitish woman, who broke through the barrier which should ever encircle God's people, and joined herself to an evil and idolatrous world. This produced the struggle which ended in blasphemy of the sacred name. It is on the common ground of the Church and the world that such fearful sins are in danger of being committed. They are the result, amongst the called people of God, whether Jew or Christian, of disregard of the grace of God. For that is the secret of His name. Such is the sin for which there is no forgiveness, the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; for He brings to light the whole counsel of God in the mystery of His grace, and, if that be despised, there is nothing more to be done. The law must take its course in all its requirements, and not only seals condemnation for this highest sin, but also judges man as a sinner, and guilty of death, for the breach of the least or any of its enactments. For in this way does the righteousness of God vindicate itself when grace through righteousness is fully rejected and denied. And so historically, when the course of God's dealings in grace has run out, and those who are saved have been set in everlasting perfectness in heaven, then His righteousness in judgment appears in all its terror.

In Rev. xix. 14, the Lamb comes forth with the armies of heaven, just as here it is commanded, "*All the congregation shall stone him.*"

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SABBATICAL YEAR AND THE JUBILEE.

IN this chapter we find the Sabbaths of days and weeks and months expanding into Sabbaths of years and Sabbaths of Sabbaths of years, stretching forth to periods without end, as it were to eternity, and all pointing onward to, and typifying, the great everlasting Sabbath of God, when He shall be all in all. And in this, as in that which has gone before, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Head of His body the Church, is the great object that fills the mind of the Holy Ghost.

VER. 1. Mount Sinai is again brought more immediately into notice in this ordinance. We know that the tabernacle had, indeed, been pitched, and that the Lord spake there unto Moses; and there we have learnt of that grace which is the fountain and channel of all blessing. But now tabernacle circumstances have passed away, and grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life is to be manifested. The whole work of grace is accomplished, and, therefore, now in every respect the arm of righteousness can be revealed. Hence we here look into eternity, with its lights and shadows of glory, where God is all in all. The fulness of the purpose for which He has been working in grace is now commencing the course which shall run on unobstructed for ever.

The introduction of this period is by the announce-

ment of the loud sounding trumpet, reverberating through the land, a memorial to God, and to the whole assembly of the congregation of His people, that the jubilee is at hand. And let us remember that this scripture is the portion of the Church by faith, as it is written:—"all things are yours;" and, "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God."

VER. 2. But, in the first place, there is an introductory Sabbath of years to be carefully and exactly observed. It is a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for the Lord, and an acknowledgment in principle, that though He has blessed the labours of His people in the cultivation of the land, yet He could cause it to bring forth abundantly without their toil. Thus He gradually leads them onward to Himself, the true rest. But the seventh year, as introductory to the Jubilee, seems like paradise rest: for it has reference only to the land, which then brought forth fruit spontaneously. And this fruit was not to be reaped or gathered in by the owner; but was to be left in the field for any one to pluck and eat there, a common good for man and beast.

In ver. 20, the question is supposed:—"What shall we eat in the seventh year?" and it is answered by the assurance that the sixth year shall produce a sufficiency for three years. "Ye shall sow in the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store." And thus God's blessing upon the labour of His people, in enabling them to "lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come" (1 Tim. vi. 19), is declared to them, as well as His ability to cause the land at rest to bring forth.

But we have in this part of the chapter an important

connection of periods, which have reference to the whole system.

(1.) The *six* years of labour, of which the *sixth* is specially blessed with an abundant increase.

(2.) The *seventh* year, the Sabbath of rest of the land.

(3.) The *three* intervening years, until the ninth year when the fruits of the eighth year come in.

(4.) The *eighth* year, *after the sabbatic year*, when sowing is to be done for gathering in the ninth.

(5.) The *ninth* year, when the fruit of the eighth is to come in, and the old fruit no longer to be eaten.

Thus in this place the *third* and the *ninth* year are coincident, and the time of eating the fruit of the eighth, and this gives us the true period of the labour of the Church, when she stands in the full intelligence of faith and resurrection life, and has found her rest. And doubtless in actual resurrection she will find the place and time of her full unhindered service, being then associated fully with her risen Head, Whose power in service she now knows and proves. Then she will labour with Him towards the ninth year's enjoyment, when death, the last enemy, shall be *destroyed*, when nothing in the wide regions of eternity shall be found to interrupt the peaceful calm of the everlasting glory, and God shall be all in all.

VER. 9. But first we have on the day of atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month, the announcement of the approaching jubilee. And we find that, with respect to the land, a Sabbath falls in with the Sabbath of years. But another and principal point is the settlement of all questions of right, service, &c., among men. "And ye shall return every man to his possession, and ye shall return every man to his family." The reference is to the

arrangements which God made from the beginning : these might in the interval have fallen into disorder, but now all is restored. And this is the time to which every question of present possession is to be referred. For, whatever changes might take place, whatever might be gained or lost, during these passing circumstances, everything would then be restored to the order of God. All that was done was to be done with regard to this time, a point which is variously and minutely insisted upon.

This fiftieth year is an eighth year, in which there might be neither sowing nor reaping. The great question of settlement is its main point; yet afterwards we have an eighth year of sowing introducing the ninth, and thus, in its connection with the great sabbatic cycle, introductory to the close. But of this time, if such be the meaning of the ninth year, little is said either in this passage or in other parts of Scripture; for it reaches beyond the course of what can be called dispensation; and, if it be referred to "the dispensation of the fulness of times," it brings us to a period when mediation, properly so called, is at an end; when the kingdom is given up to God, even the Father, and He is all in all, which seems to preclude the idea of mediation.

But in the regular course of the appointed Sabbaths and the jubilee, a seventh and an eighth year come together, both of which are Sabbaths. We may compare with this the "entering into rest," and the "labouring to enter in" (Heb. iv. 3, 11); as well as the double rest spoken of by the Lord in Matt. xi. 28, 29. For He both says, "I will give you rest," and, "ye shall find rest." The one rest is *given*, that is *in Him*; while the other is *obtained*, that is, *in the knowledge of Him*, of what He is. The former is the seventh, the latter the eighth year.

And this agrees with the apparently double character of the eighth year; it is a Sabbath, and yet in the usual course it is the year of labour. So our very labour is rest, for it is comprehended in obedience to the command, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." In the Epistle to the Hebrews, too, the labour is the labour of that faith which knows the value of the great High Priest, Who has passed into the heavens. In a word, it is the bringing the soul under the influence of principles which will form the everlasting rest of heaven, the becoming conformed to God. And this can only be done through the "faith that worketh by love;" for "God is love," and "love never faileth."

Thus the combination of seventh and eighth year Sabbaths sets forth the present position of the Church in the *anticipation* of heaven, the realisation of what is revealed in the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the crucifixion of the nature that hinders us from entering into the joy of it. Let us not forget to apply to ourselves practically the fact, that labour is connected with the full enjoyment of the rest of the eighth day.

The prophetic announcement of the sounding of the great trumpet of Jubilee is contained in Isaiah lxi.-lxiii. The Lord at the commencement of His ministry (Luke iv. 16-30) takes up a part of this prophecy, and declares its fulfilment in His own person. For it speaks of the acceptable year of the Lord, which is also the year of righteousness; for "the righteous Lord loveth righteousness" (Psalm xi. 7). It is the year both of deliverance and judgment; but the fulfilment to which the Lord refers in Luke does not embrace the judgment; for at that time His mission was one of grace: but it was connected with righteousness also, for the axe was even then

laid to the root of the trees, and in the result His ministry will be the ground of judgment. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." And in the following chapter of Leviticus (xxvi.) we have judgment, too, but especially restorative judgment; while in Isaiah (lxiii.) we have the retributive judgment. So at the sound of the seventh trumpet, in Rev. xi., the manifestation of Jesus in power also shows the transaction of this great period of righteousness.

The first mentioned particular of the year of Jubilee is its introduction, at the close of the great revolution of years, by the sounding of the trumpet throughout all the land on the day of atonement. Then follow the commands:—

Ye shall proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.

Ye shall return every man unto his possession, and every man unto his family.

Ye shall neither sow, nor reap, nor gather; but ye shall eat the increase in the field.

Ye shall not oppress one another; but all matters of buying or selling shall be decided with reference to the number of years from the Jubilee.

The day of atonement ushering in the Jubilee tells of the whole blessed work of the Lord Jesus, as set forth in the full particulars of that day (Lev. xvi.). There is the sin offering for the priests and the people, the burnt offerings, access into the holiest of all, and the cleansing of all from the holiest to the altar, leaving to sinners free intercourse with the whole. Thus the Lord, quoting Isaiah lxi. 1, 2, presents Himself and the work He was to accomplish. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon *Me*,

because the Lord hath anointed *Me*, to proclaim *liberty*, the *acceptable year*," etc.

Then, in accordance with the above-named particulars, we have the giving of "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," etc. (ver. 3).

And in the next verse the building of the old wastes is mentioned, the raising up of the former desolations, the repairing of the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

Such things are also plainly the work of the Lord Jesus according to the revelations of His glorious gospel. The children of the kingdom are regarded as alienated from their rightful possessions, but as about to be fully restored by Christ's ministry of grace. And in such a sense the Lord Jesus meets antitypically this as well as every other ordinance of the law. He is the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the paths to dwell in. He finds disorder and confusion pervading all things, the inheritance in the hands of strangers, etc., and forthwith, by His own work, proclaims the Jubilee.

And His work is given as the ground of rest also; for what He has done shows plainly that there is no need of any other. He that knows Him is well aware how all needful things spring up spontaneously for Him; in other words, he now knows the sufficiency of God, and that in Jesus is the fulness from which he receives and grace for grace.

And so on the same ground our intercourse one with another is regulated: and therefore the injunction is given, "Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man." The righteousness of God is known, not only as remembering any work or labour of love, but also

as not allowing any false dealing among His people, which would interfere with His righteous purpose of bringing each to his own inheritance. But it will be as the Lord says; "many that are first shall be last, and the last first." Therefore He would have us do everything with respect to this great year of restitution. "Whatsoever ye do," even if it be eating and drinking, do all to the glory of God, that is, with respect to this great end.

And it will have an important and manifest influence on all our actions if we, in the understanding of faith, take our place on the day of atonement, with the loud trumpet of Jubilee sounding in our ears. For whether we recognise it or not, this surely is our position. "Let your moderation (lit. "forbearance") be known unto all; the Lord is at hand" (Phil iv. 5).

"Be ye also patient; stablish your heart; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold the Judge standeth before the door" (James v. 8, 9).

"Behold I stand at the door and knock" (Rev. iii. 20). "I sleep, but my heart waketh; it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh" (Cant. v. 2). And so, according to our estimation of the number of years from the Jubilee will be the value that we shall put upon any present possession. Unless we say in our hearts, "My Lord delayeth His coming," we shall gladly give up rather than contend about any question of present right. And the number of years is an open question for *faith* to decide. But evidently in the case of the Israelites, the nearer to the year of Jubilee they were, the less price would any be disposed to give for temporary possession. And if the day of atonement were already arrived, and the

trumpet had announced the commencing Jubilee, none would be so foolish as to trouble themselves about gaining or retaining possession of that which must so soon be restored to its rightful owner.

VER. 23. "The land shall not be sold for ever (for cutting off); for the *land is Mine*; for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land."

This tells us of the "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away," and of the present waiting position of those for whom it is "reserved in heaven," of the "strangers of the dispersion." Of this land all the allotments are in the hands of God, even as the Lord says in answer to the sons of Zebedee:—"It shall be given to those for whom it is prepared of my Father (Matt. xx. 23). But if any desire a chief place, let him be the servant of all. Compare the allotments of the tribes by Moses and Joshua. And the principle of Col. iii. 23 is applicable;—"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the *inheritance*."

VER. 25-28. "If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold," etc.

We have now set before us the way of redemption, and the duty of the redeemer kinsman (Goel), when the owner of the inheritance is poor, and thus needs the intervention of some one who is able to assist him. The case here presented is that of those who through their poverty were not able to keep the inheritance that was given to them; but needed to have it established to them by one who was able to restore it—through redemption.

In the book of Ruth we have the account of this redemption historically; while in Jeremiah xxxii. we have it prophetically—that is, its results are spoken of as yet to come, and as being for the present a thing to be believed (ver. 15).

In Ruth we have the owner waxed poor, a wanderer in a strange land: and when it was certain that there was none else to redeem her inheritance for her, Boaz, the man of strength, comes forward and performs the part of kinsman. Previously she had nearer kinsmen, but after the redemption she became the *wife* of Boaz.

The Church has the understanding of both these Scriptures, as having received from the great Redeemer the Spirit, the “earnest of the inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession.” Hence we are directed to look forward to the dispensation of the fullness of times, the time of the restitution of all things, the great jubilee of which God has spoken by the mouth of *all* His prophets since the world began.

VER. 26-28. “And *if* the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it, then let him,” etc.

The whole question of these verses hangs upon the “*if* ;”—“if he be able ;” “if he be not able.” In the former case the redemption price must be arranged according to the number of years ; in the latter, the possession must remain in the hand of *him that bought it* until the jubilee.

In the first instance, while the whole burden of redemption rests upon the Lord Jesus Christ, there is also implied, as affecting its time, our condition as having become (in His strength) fellow-workers with Him, both on behalf of ourselves and one another.

It is certain that both measure of reward, and enlarged

capacity for enjoyment, as well as an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom, are proposed as objects to be attained by service in this life. Probably these and such things are involved in the words, "If he be able;" while the clause, "if he be not able," refers the weakest to the grace which provides the inheritance even for such, the inheritance which has been already purchased, and will remain secure in the hands of the Purchaser until the great day of manifested redemption.

VER. 29, 30. The preceding verses refer to *the land*, but we have now a more special question of the redemption of "a dwelling-house in a walled city." Such a possession, if alienated, might be redeemed in the course of a full year; but if not, it would afterwards be established for ever to him that bought it, and would not go out in the jubilee.

This seems to refer entirely to the reward of service. The city is ever the manifestation of the light of the truth of God, whether in grace or glory. Compare Matt. v. 14; Rev. xxi.; Heb. xi. 10; Rev. iii. 12. The apportionment of reward is in proportion to the present amount of power of service committed, provided it be proportionately used and improved, as in the parable of the talents (Matt. xxiv. 14). In Luke xix. 12, the citizens are mentioned, but the talents are committed only to servants. The "full year," marked by the revolution of God's feasts, tells us of the time for the redemption of this portion. Compare Ephes. v. 16; Col. iv. 5; 2 John 8.

This law, then, is not concerned with the inalienable possession of the land, which, whatever intervene, must be restored in the Jubilee; but has reference to present redemption, during the period of service, of a possession, the alienation of which, if it continued beyond a full

year, would *at the jubilee be confirmed*. Compare Luke xix. 24, and Col. iii. 22-24, where these two points are mentioned in connection. There is the security of the inheritance (*i.e.*, of the land); but as to the question of service ("ye *serve* the *Lord Christ* "), each shall receive according to that he hath *done*, and there is no respect of persons (*i.e.* in this matter).

VER. 31. "But the houses of the villages, which have no walls round about them, shall be counted as the fields of the country: they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubilee." The villages are generally the unenclosed, unguarded, portions round about the cities, which, as being fenced with walls gates and bars, are contrasted with them (Ezek. xxxviii. 11; Isa. xlii. 11; Josh. xix. 8). The same word (בֵּית) is also used for the courts of the house, as contrasted with the house (Ezek. ix. 7).

There seems to be here an indication (such as generally pervades these ordinances) of grace, and especially of grace even in the question of reward of service. The case is that of a house in a village. The great principle is reward according to righteousness. But we are here shown that there may be weakness, a feeble apprehension of the mind of the Lord concerning the nature and reward of service, no anticipation, no realising sense of the certainty by which one may say, "God is not unrighteous to forget my work and labour of love," "Henceforth there is laid up for me the bright reward of service." Yet the Lord is gracious, *His redemption* is a large work, and there shall be dwelling houses in the villages in the land which come within the compass of it: the year of Jubilee shall reveal the reward even for a cup of cold water given to a disciple.

VER. 32-34. But the special grace of the Lord to the Church is seen in the reservation on behalf of the Levites, who are the typical representatives of the Church in *service*. They know that the whole of their service and power of service is of grace; that the treasure is in earthen vessels, while the excellency of the power is of God. They know themselves to be but the channels through which the grace that is in Christ is flowing forth in fulness to His people in their service to them. They know the external portion of reward in the heavenly city to be inalienable. And so the servants of the Lord, in the use of His grace which gives them both place and power of service, must meet its reward. Here the law has regard to the redemption both of the "cities of the Levites," and "of the houses of the cities of their possession," either of which may be redeemed at any time. The general reference is rather to the Levites as a body, though as an individual question, namely of a house in a city, if any one had suffered a house in a city, his portion, to become alienated, it was a part of the cities of their possession, and might at any time be redeemed. Thus the grace of God was set forth, which both kept the whole body in its place of service, and was ready to reinstate the individual.

But though the cities might become alienated for a time (just as the Church may fall manifestly out of its place of testimony), they must revert to the Levites in the Jubilee, as being the portion, not as it were of the land, but taken out of it after it had been already divided to the tribes of the congregation. And the suburbs, the place for their cattle and goods (Numb. xxxv.), might never be sold, but were their perpetual possession. The place of store in the heavenly possession

may never pass into the hands of another; it is God's gift.

The instance, mentioned in Acts iv. 36, 37, of Barnabas, a Levite, having land and selling it, shows us that he knew of the better and more certain possession in the heavenly land, and had learnt the true value of his present possession, whether as a Levite he rightfully held it or not (probably it was not rightly held). And this gives us a key to the moral force for the Church of the truth here unfolded. The possessions, in our case, are not of the earthly land, but of the heavenly; and their alienation is the result of failure in service through want of confidence in the character of God. For alas! many, who should now be prominent in the Levitical character, have apparently forfeited all title to the Levitical inheritance by an utter failure in service and testimony. Nay, they almost seem to have lost the reversion of the land itself, so mingled are they with the evil of the world. Nevertheless, the true Levites will in the end be found in the cities of their possession, which God has declared to be inalienable. And in the meantime the example of Barnabas, "the son of consolation," exhorts them to renounce all present hope, and to look forward to the city which hath foundations. Yet the same history also warns them to avoid the being led away by impulses of mere human affections, as Barnabas subsequently was, from the place of service into which the Lord has separated them.

VER. 35. In the case of the poor, the stranger, and the sojourner, now presented to us, we have an exhibition of the blessed principles of grace and love on which the Lord would have His children act one toward another.

He has been speaking of His own positive arrange-

ments with respect to this great jubilee time, and has commanded that all the estranged inheritances should be restored to their owners. And so, if at any time a brother were waxing poor, one might be tempted to withhold help on the plea that the year of release is at hand (Deut. xv. 9). But this would be a grievous sin.

In like manner, if we satisfy our conscience with the thought that our jubilee is nigh, and that the weak, the ignorant, and the poor in the things of God, will soon be in different circumstances; and if we so withhold anything, either spiritual or temporal, which would contribute to their present strength in testimony, or to their individual happiness or welfare, this will surely be sin to us.

VER. 39-43. Compare with these verses Exod. xxi. 1-6; Isa. lvi. 6-8. Grace is still to be predominant in a further case of extreme poverty. "If thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond servant, but as an hired servant and a sojourner he shall be with thee." Before those who are in such misfortune the Jubilee is set as the time when they shall be restored to their possession. And as a present motive connected with this fact which should prevent His people from ruling over each other with rigour, the Lord reminds them that they are His servants, whom He brought forth out of the land of Egypt.

In the matter of service in the Church, wherever the Lord has given a gift, He has thereby rendered the individual a debtor to exercise it (Rom. i. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 16). But they to whom the Lord has thus presented any one in the condition of a debtor, are to receive the service as from a servant of the Lord, and not as a thing which may be exacted as a right, as though the gifted person were a

bond servant, and they were in lawful possession of his person. They must rather regard his ministry simply as a discharge of the debt owing. This regulates throughout the congregation the principle of both rendering and receiving service. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord," is the law for rendering it; while the remembrance of the Master in heaven will direct us how to receive it.

VER. 40. But further, all questions of debt of service must be settled when the approaching season of restitution arrives. Then the poor servant of the Lord and of His people will return to his possession, and, it may be, find it a large one; even as, though now poor, yet in the exercise of service he may be making many rich.

VER. 44. From this verse to the close of the chapter the Lord defines the relative position of the people and the heathen round about them, or dwelling as strangers and sojourners among them, with regard to the question of service and the redemption. Israelites might take bondmen and bondmaids from among the heathen; for the latter were to be their possession for ever. This permission may refer to the great result when the seed of the Lord shall inherit the riches of the Gentiles, when in them all the families of the earth shall be blessed; while they still and ever maintain the place of superiority. Or it may merely show the condition of those children of the stranger who were brought to dwell among the people of the Lord, that they were in the position of bond servants.

But on the other hand, if the stranger or sojourner should wax rich, and a brother near him should become poor and so be compelled to serve him, yet the Israelite might be at any time redeemed or should certainly go out in the Jubilee.

This seems to point to the condition of Israel as being subject to the Gentiles. But it will equally apply to the heavenly or earthly people of the Lord, either of whom may fall, in present poverty, into this evil condition. But the Redeemer Kinsman is at hand to deliver. And in the condition of yearly hired servants only can God's people be held to serve. His family, or any member of it, can only be left for a time in circumstances of servitude to strangers; for they are the servants of the Lord Who brought them out of the land of Egypt; and so for them in all circumstances there is present redemption and the full restoration of the Jubilee.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PROMISES AND THREATS.

ALL that was necessary for Israel to know and observe, in order that they might maintain their place and character as the holy people of the Lord, had now been revealed. Consequently, the present chapter contains the promises of blessing to obedience, and the threatenings of judgment upon disobedience. At the same time it gives intimation that grace will ultimately triumph over all the evil, according to the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

It commences with a warning against idolatry, and an injunction to regard the Sabbaths, and reverence the sanctuary of the Lord.

There is ever the danger, after all that the Lord has done and commanded, of allowing some visible thing to take His place. Whatsoever has the power of ministering to present gratification may become an idol; and thus in the New Testament the attractive evil of covetousness is termed idolatry. But God in the communication of His true blessing will always teach His people the needful lesson of dependence on, and patient waiting for, Himself. For a walk of faith is our duty while the Church's condition of hope continues; so that every visible thing on which we rest is in principle an idol, and causes a departure from the great rule of faith which God is now teaching, and wherein we learn that which will

be the basis of certainty for eternity—that His grace alone can supply our needs.

And intimately connected with the prohibition of idolatry is the observance of the Sabbath and the reverence of the sanctuary. For to regard the Sabbath is to regard the true rest which God has provided in Jesus, to refuse to turn aside from the remembrance of what He has done in completing the work of our salvation. So, too, in respect to the sanctuary: for where the blood of Jesus is, there is also the Holy Ghost. But the Church is now the temple of God, and every believer a dwelling place of the Holy Ghost. We must therefore take heed; for “if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.”

These, then, are the three great points of which we need to be reminded; for failure in any or all of them is the beginning of departure from God, and brings down judgment upon His people.

These precepts afford the groundwork of all true obedience, and by keeping close to them we run onward in the way of the Lord, in keeping His commandments. Therefore they come to us as positive commands—“Ye shall,” &c.—for these contain the principle of salvation. And they are immediately followed by the blessings promised to obedience, and the judgments consequent on disobedience.

The promised blessings are of various kinds, both personal and circumstantial; and not only are they prepared and preserved for the people, but the people themselves are prepared and preserved for the enjoyment of the blessings. The great blessing, that which comprised and gave value to all the others, was the presence of God Himself;—“I will set My tabernacle among you :

and My soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be My people." This promise is quoted in 2 Cor. vi. 16, where separation from evil unto God is being enforced : and its connection there gives us a key to the force of the context here. The recipients of the grace of God are in all things to approve themselves His ministers, and that in the midst of every trial. But they must especially do so as being separated to God and having no fellowship with those things which by their intrinsic character indicate contrariety to Him. There is much of parallel instruction in this passage of Corinthians and the present chapter of Leviticus. We may notice the distinction between light and darkness, between an unbeliever and a believer, between Christ and Belial, between the temple of God and idols, &c. And the great blessing in both places, which this one scripture supplies, is the dwelling of God with men, and his walking among them.

In ver. 13, it is added—"I am the Lord your God Which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen ; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright." Compared with its context this seems to show that the possibility of Israel's lapsing again into the position of servants could only happen in case of their disobedience. And the same may be said in regard to their waxing poor ; for God's blessing in abundance was promised to obedience.

But all the blessings promised to *obedience* are regarded as being liable to forfeiture through disobedience. Therefore it is only after the course of intervening judgments upon disobedience has run out, that, in the end, God remembers the covenant which He Himself made, the sure

basis and pledge of that blessing for which the failure of the people and His consequent judgments have been preparing them by teaching the great lesson that all is from Him and is the result of His grace. As soon as disobedience to the commandment of the Lord has manifested itself, then comes judgment, in order to reveal the evil and lead us back to obedience. But if the chastisement proves fruitless, and disregard of God still continues, then further judgment comes, and so on till the end. Throughout the judgment is manifestly and intentionally restorative, but it is ineffectual; so that, if there is to be any permanent blessing at all, it must spring from the everlasting covenant, which sets nature aside altogether, and brings in death and resurrection.

We may observe in this chapter that the evil progressively increases, as also does the judgment, until in the end Israel is cast out. Such also is the course with the Church (Rev. iii. 16).

But there are seven principal characteristic points in the whole chapter which mark the progress of God's dealing with His people; and in each instance the cause of the difference of treatment is set forth.

First, obedience is supposed, and the fullest blessing is promised as a result.

The five intermediate instances are questions of the effect of reproofing judgments which fail to *amend* the people, but do not fail in God's purpose of bringing them to know that all their blessing depended on Him, and of forcing them at last to the *confession of their own iniquity*, and the iniquity of their fathers.

This course of the questions between God and His people stands thus :—

I. "If ye walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them" (ver. 3).

II. "But if ye will not hearken unto Me, and will not do all these commandments," &c. (ver. 14).

III. "And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto Me" (ver. 18).

IV. "And if ye walk contrary unto Me (or, 'at all adventures with Me'), and will not hearken unto Me" (ver. 21).

V. "And if ye will not be reformed by Me by these things, but will walk contrary unto Me" (ver. 23).

VI. "And if ye will not for all this hearken unto Me, but walk contrary unto Me" (ver. 27).

VII. "If they shall confess their iniquity and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity" (ver. 40, 41).

And the time of the last case shall certainly come: for such is the purpose of God, according to *His* covenant, which He will not break. Israel shall at length accept of the punishment of their iniquity, and God will then remember His covenant, and remember the land. For every step of His dealing with His people, through all their failures, is leading on to the manifestation of His own grace, and is humbling them and preparing them as ready recipients of His wondrous love.

VER. 42. The Lord promises to remember His covenant with Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham, putting the name of Jacob first. For Jacob exhibits the circumstances of those who come into actual possession of the blessings of the everlasting covenant. He would not let God depart till He had blessed him (Gen. xxxii. 26). He prevailed as a prince, having power with God; and in Ps. xxiv. 6 it is said:—"This is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek Thy face, even Jacob."

The result of all that has gone before in this book is thus shown to be the bringing of the people to the knowledge of the grace of God, and to dependence upon Him. When they confess their iniquity, then I will remember. The whole of the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth chapters is characteristically summed up in the last verse;—"These are the *statutes and judgments and laws*, which the Lord made *between Him and the children of Israel* in *Mount Sinai* by the hand of Moses." This appears to indicate a separation and distinction of the following and last chapter from all that has gone before. The twenty-seventh chapter is characterised in its last verse;—"These are the commandments which the *Lord commanded Moses* for the *children* of Israel in *Mount Sinai*.

CHAPTER XXVII.

VOWS OF DEVOTION.

THIS chapter, as we have just seen, is not concerned with the making of statutes, etc., *between* the Lord and the people, but with the giving of commandments for them. The main point is the doing by any of the people of something as a voluntary act, or, as it is termed, the making of "a singular vow," a vow special or remarkable in itself. Directions are minutely given for such cases, but the fact of their occurrence seems to imply the knowledge of the full standing of grace which the previous part of this book has taught. The specific directions here given show the Lord's approval of such a vow. There was neither any injunction to make it, nor yet any direct commendation of the act; nevertheless, if a person did so, there were commandments to guide him. It was, therefore, an act which the Lord's people might rightly and acceptably do, yet only in accordance with the directions given.

It had reference to the persons of men or women, to beasts clean and unclean, to houses, and to fields either of inheritance or purchase. The object seems to be the dedication of any of these to the Lord. The vow recognises the act of the Lord Himself in having given, and returns to Him that which He had first bestowed. It is something more than God required; but at the same time His requirements are carefully guarded, and must

not be trenched upon. Accordingly, if any should make this singular vow, it must be defined by the Lord's regulations, and His estimate of the value of the thing dedicated must be strictly attended to. Any person might make the vow ; but the persons must be for the Lord according to the specified estimation. There is a contrast between this passage and Exod. xxx. 11-16. The object there was an atonement for the soul, and for that all were to give alike, as an acknowledgment that all equally needed it, and that for his life one could give no more than another. The amount paid was, therefore, unvarying, viz., half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary as in the present case. The subject of this chapter is not, however, redemption ; but relates to the value of service in the case of a redeemed person ; and this is to be decided by God's estimate.

The first paragraph refers to the dedication of persons ; and the Lord's estimate of value, as given below, is arranged according to age, the female in each case being of less value than the male :

	MALE.	FEMALE.
1. From 20 years old to 60,	50 shekels.	30 shekels.
2. „ 5 „ 20,	20 „	10 „
3. „ 1 month to 5 years,	5 „	3 „
4. „ 60 years and upwards,	15 „	10 „

VER. 8. " But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him ; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him."

God knows and marks accurately the condition and power of service in any who profess to dedicate themselves to Him. And thus, if dedication has taken place, it becomes a matter of requirement with God that that which is dedicated should be rendered.

But we are also shown how to settle the value of a person under peculiar circumstances. God truly comes in with His own grace in this instance as in all others; and if any be poorer than the usual estimation, he may, on presenting himself to the priest, be valued according to his ability. Hence there is a way for the poor also to devote their small service to the Lord, through the intervention of the priest. *God* would estimate the dedicated person at His own just estimation, and would require it; but if the man were too poor, as all are, the matter might be arranged through the mediation of the priest. God's estimation is already declared, and cannot be changed; it is definite; but the priest's is according to the man's ability, and this is grace in the acceptance of service thus devoted to the Lord, when one discovers himself to be falling short of what he ought to do, of rendering the vowed offering to God. God has estimated rightly, and the value declared is the true value, and is required; if we cannot pay it, we must go to the priest, the Lord Jesus.

The priest's estimation is said to be "according to his ability that vowed." We find a similar provision in the offerings, as mentioned, *e.g.*, in Lev. v. 7. Here it seems to be the acceptance of service devoted to the Lord, not according to the just estimate of what that service ought to be, but in grace, according to the ability of one found to be poorer than the Lord's estimation.

This is probably an instance of the vows to which the Lord refers in Matt. v. 33. They were to be strictly performed; but He says, "Swear not at all." For here we discover intimations that, if any did vow, he might be found to be poorer than the Lord's estimation, and that grace would be needed even in the acceptance

of the performed vow. The true spirit of service rendered is found in 2 Cor. viii., where in the twelfth verse we read :—"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

Since the dedication is for service, the valuation is the highest for such as are best able by reason of age to render it—those who are from twenty to sixty years old. And the service is rendered under the constraint of motives implanted in the soul, not from the compulsion of a fixed law. God gives abundantly to His people, and loves a cheerful giver.

The true moral force of the vow to us is, perhaps, that all our service is *due* to the Lord. And so this chapter would seem to occupy the place of the Apostle's "therefore" in the epistles—as in Rom. xii. 1, "I beseech you *therefore*," &c. But the Lord receives our *due* service in that grace which can make allowance for failure; and so He sets aside the vows in Matt. v. For we can but give Him His own, and that, too, in the use of the power communicated by Himself. Therefore, our vowing to do anything implies that we have the power to do, which we have not, and comes of evil, that is, of nature. But, on the other hand, the Lord loves us to give out of the abundance which He has given, and in the confidence that we have unfailing resources. "Freely ye have received, freely give." "He loveth a cheerful giver."

But all this relates to the service of persons, and the money given is the equivalent for the service of the tabernacle according to the estimation of the person who could not personally render the service. They could not actually be in the tabernacle, and thus a medium was

appointed through which their service might be rendered. God would in this manner receive their vow, and the estimation would be a holy thing unto the Lord. They would be contributing to the service of the sanctuary, though they were not actually in it. Yet they were connected with it, and in the priesthood had access.

The mere fact that the Lord estimated the value of any person or thing that was vowed to Him, shows that it was already His by right. And this is seen still more strongly in the case of those who proved poorer than the estimation, and were not able to render what they had vowed. And so it is said, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price;" and, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do."

For the fact is that anything which a man can vow is already God's by right. It is only on the ground of the full redemption of grace that any one can render service, and all those who would render it should know that God must exercise much grace, even in receiving that which they *can* render. But the Priest, the Lord Jesus, is with God, and not only presents the sacrifice and the blood, but also the service in His estimation, and it is according to the estimation of the Priest that God accepts it.

The parable of the talents has a connection with this. For if the slothful receiver had known the grace of God as set forth in this chapter, he would not have spoken of Him as a hard Master, but would have known how He accepts each man according to his ability."

VER. 9, 10. The ordinance with regard to "a beast whereof men bring an offering unto the Lord" is positive:

it may not be changed ; or, if it be changed, both it and the exchange shall be holy.

In the case of persons, they were to be for the Lord, when vowed, by the estimation ; that is, it was appointed for them that the estimated value in shekels of silver should be in lieu of the persons.

In that of clean beasts, the vow must stand just as it was promised ; there could be no redemption.

In that of unclean beasts, they were to be estimated by the priest ; and, if they were redeemed, a fifth part was to be added to the estimation.

The same rule applied to a house.

In the case of a field of possession, it might be redeemed, and the estimation was to be calculated according to the number of years from the time of Jubilee. But in that of a purchased field, only the estimation could be given to the Lord ; because the field itself would have to go out in the Jubilee, and would again become the possession of its hereditary owner.

The clean beasts are typical of Christ, of His purity and perfectness, of all that He was as an offering to God. They are said to be beasts "whereof men bring an offering unto the Lord." What we offer unto the Lord is of the grace which we have in Christ, of the fruits of His Spirit Which is in us. But whatever we are in fact, God requires us to be in spirit even as He is, and still to yield ourselves, under the power of His Spirit, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Him. The doing this is called λογικὴν λατρείαν ("reasonable service"), that is, an offering unto God of worship, or rather of service, in spiritual intelligence. What the beasts signify is also shown in many places of Scripture ; as, when the Lord says,—“ I will have mercy, and not sacrifice ; ” “ Sacrifice

and offering Thou wouldst not." But God did require an actual sacrifice once in the person of Christ Jesus, in order that we might be able to approach Him; and He still requires symbolical sacrifices, our living bodies, the fruit of our lips, &c. If we desire to offer these to Him, we may not redeem nor exchange them; for, "whether they be good or bad, they are holy."

God must see all our service, and all in which we stand related to Him, perfect in Christ; and at the same time we should render to Him the spiritually intelligent worship and service which is His due, and which He has empowered us to render. But we must beware lest our failing in the latter should lead us to think of failure as before God. The consciousness of our own shortcomings should rather cause us to feel the preciousness of Christ, Who is for us "an offering and sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savour;" and should make us realise what we are in Him, and long to be like Him practically. We see, then, from the clean beasts what we may give to God; but we may not alter, or change, or in any way dispense with, that which we offer. For it is Christ and our perfection in Him. This God requires, otherwise He cannot regard us. He receives no imperfect offering in Christ, and by the Spirit; and though our own sense of imperfection may make us feel that we must have an exchange, *yet both the offering and the exchange are holy.* The latter is Christ, the Perfect, the former ourselves, the ever imperfect; but in Him and with Him we are perfect in service and acceptable to God. We may thus see reason to change, but must remember that neither the vowed animal nor the exchange could be withdrawn.

Of unclean beasts, which could not be offered in sacri-

fice, the estimation only could be presented to the Lord. These, perhaps, signify what we are by nature, that is, when yet unredeemed, and thus unclean. Here, therefore, is an acceptance in grace, for the beast was to be presented before the priest for estimation; he was to value it, whether it were good or bad; and as he valued it so should it be. The bad would probably signify nature unsubjected, and the good nature subjected and so made the present instrument of service.

But there may be the desire to redeem the unclean animal, in which case a fifth part is to be added to the estimation; that is, a little more than the estimated value is to be given, and that, too, in the silver of the shekel of the sanctuary. Thus it is that the knowledge of redemption conveys the knowledge of a power of service beyond that which is natural. And it is on this ground that our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost; for we are not our own, but are bought with a price. The body is not to be prostituted to evil, it is a part of the *περιποίησις*, or "purchased possession," and the abode of the Spirit, in Whom we are one with the Lord; for "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit."

In this case, as in that of persons, the shekel of the sanctuary is the medium by which any such offerings are accepted.

The priest is the valuer; the shekel of the sanctuary the standard of value, and this is of silver. The priest points to the grace which brings us to God in acceptance; the shekel of the sanctuary to the exact and perfect righteousness which is the standard of judgment; and the silver to the purity and value of the medium. The fifth part added shows the additional value brought by redemption and the knowledge of it, "if He will at all

redeem it." The priest's estimation is in grace; but the price is more than that, for the redemption confers the value.

The Lord Jesus fully pays the price and more for all whom He esteems, and that which was precious becomes more so.

We have seen that the persons, though God's just estimate of their value is given, would be accepted, that is, in grace, according to the estimation of the priest, according to the ability of him that vowed.

The clean beasts, if once given, could neither be changed nor estimated; but themselves, as given, must be the Lord's. And if any would wish to exchange, both that which was originally given and the exchange must be holy.

But the unclean beasts were to stand according to the estimation of the priest, and the amount of his estimation was to be for the Lord. Redemption was, however, to be allowed in this case, by paying a fifth part more than the amount of the priest's estimation.

So with regard to the next instance, the house sanctified to the Lord; it was to be estimated by the priest, whether good or bad, and to stand according to his estimation. And redemption was permitted in this case also, as in that of the unclean beasts, and on the same terms:—"he shall add the fifth of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his."

The house is the work of man's hands, and is so distinguished from the land which was inalienably given of God. If it be, as was supposed in the case of the house in the Jubilee, the building up in present service of that which will be found for future reward in the inheritance, then the sanctifying it to the Lord will be

the acknowledgment of Him as the fountain of all power for such service, and of our own failure in actual use of the power. And service needs, too, to be estimated by the priest, whether it be good or bad. The fifth part added to the estimation is the acknowledgment of gracious acceptance in redemption, and the renewed exertion consequent upon that knowledge.

Then, the field of possession is to be valued according to the seed, and may be redeemed at an estimation having reference to the Jubilee. The full time was reckoned at the rate of an homer of barley seed at fifty shekels of silver, and deduction was to be made according to the number of years that had already passed since the Jubilee, if the field had been sanctified after it.

The field, which was given of God and inalienable, is the inheritance of heaven and eternal life, and the present dedication of it to God, and its redemption to present possession, show the consciousness that it can only be held of grace and redemption, and indicate renewed exertion towards the attainment of it (Phil. iii. 11). Consequently, the dedication will diminish in value in proportion to our apprehension of the nearness of the great day of actual possession. Of this redemption in its effect it is said, "it shall be assured to him." And if there be no redemption, or if the field be sold to another, and so remain till the Jubilee, then it shall be for ever holy unto the Lord, and shall be the priest's. This hints at the condition of those who disregard the offer of grace which is unto all, and so lose the inheritance. But there is no frustration of the grace of God, neither could there be; and the declaration that it shall be the priest's marks the sovereignty of grace.

The condition of the Jews as contrasted with the

Church may be here shown forth; since they are corporately priests to God: and the Jubilee would then be the termination of the day of grace and redemption.

The homer of barley seed at fifty shekels of silver shows the same amount as that which was required for the redemption of the best of the persons, from twenty to sixty years of age.

The seed is the Word of God, and barley is characteristic of the Church in present circumstances. Only by the seed of the Word are any begotten again to the portion of life and inheritance in the kingdom, and their value is thus as much as God by the seed has made it; there was no value before. And so the homer of barley seed producing, before the Jubilee, crops to the value of fifty shekels of silver, that is, to the yearly value of one shekel, seems to represent the perfection of service.

But a field which is bought, and is not a field of possession, must revert in the Jubilee; and if it be sanctified to the Lord, the estimation until the Jubilee is all that can be given. We must know that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. The Church, by her present position, occupies that which will hereafter belong to the Jew, and the value of the occupation is to be given to the Lord.

When the time of Jubilee comes, the outcast Jew must return to his possession: in the meanwhile the redemption is with those who are occupying the land, and may be given as a holy thing to the Lord.

Again the injunction is repeated, that all estimations must be according to the shekel of the sanctuary; for this is God's holy standard, departure from which is error and confusion.

In a word, the things which can be vowed seem to be

seven-fold, and comprise all that man has to dedicate. But all these things are not subject to redemption ; for some are the indications of redemption itself.

1. Persons. Male, according to age.
2. " Female. " "
3. Beasts. Clean, offered in sacrifice.
4. " Unclean, not offered to the Lord.
5. House.
6. Field of possession.
7. Field of purchase.

VER. 26. An ordinance follows which sets forth still more definitely the grace of God as the fountain of all service. None might sanctify the firstlings of the beasts, because they were already, by positive requirement, the Lord's ; the clean beasts to be offered, and the unclean to be redeemed. This was the memorial that the Lord had by strength of hand delivered Israel out of Egypt, and saved them from the destruction of the first-born (Exod. xiii. 12-16). And thus it reminded them that it was by the positive redemption of their persons that God had put them in circumstances to do anything, or to offer an offering to Him.

But there are some things which may not be redeemed at all ; viz., that which is "devoted" unto the Lord "of all that a man hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession." "None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death."

In Numbers xxi. 2, 3, we have an instance of due regard to this ordinance ; and in 1 Sam. xv. 18-23, an example of disregard. To us God has given positive directions respecting the matter : there are certain things which He calls upon us to devote in entire renunciation

on the ground of His promises. And we can by no means realise these promises unless we are obedient to His command. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." The world is a devoted thing; and if we think to redeem it, we are proving ourselves to be disobedient by disregarding the positive declarations of God. For He says:—"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters."

VER. 30. Now follows a further assertion of the Lord's claim to the tenth, whether of the fruit of the trees and the seed of the land, or of the herd or flock. The former might be redeemed, the latter might not: for the firstlings were the memorial of God's deliverance, and the acknowledgment of Him as the originator of blessing.

These tithes are a permanent recognition of God as the eternal Giver of all blessing to His people. Jacob promised them to the Lord, and they must be remembered by all the generation of Jacob. We have instances of the remembrance of them, after they had been neglected and forgotten, in 2 Chron. xxxi., and Neh. xiii. 12.

In Mal. iii. 8, 10, the Lord rebukes Israel for withholding the tithes, denouncing their conduct as a robbery of God, and challenging them to obedience in this matter as being the only way in which they could again obtain abundant blessing, since it was a simple recognition of God as the Author of it.

There is redemption for the fruit and seed, but none for the herd or flock. Of the fruits the enjoyment is ours in redemption; but of all that pass under the rod, the tithe is not redeemable. There may be a reference

here to the redeemed persons, "the sheep." There is to be no "search whether it be good or bad," a command which seems to be a distinct pre-shadowing of the election of grace, the Church. See Jer. xxxiii. 13; Ezek. xx. 37; Micah vii. 14.

VER. 34. "These are the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai."

THE END.

